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Delta to end flights to Saipan, Palau

By BEA CABRERA
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REPORTER

Delta Air Lines is bidding adieu to Micronesia, with the Atlanta-based carrier ending its service to Saipan and Palau effective May 6 this year. Delta currently flies out of Narita, Japan to Saipan and Palau.

In a statement, Hiroko Okada from the corporate communications department of Delta Air Lines attributed this decision to "unsustainable pressure," including lower demand, in the Micronesia market.

Okada said that Delta is committed to the Japan market and continues to focus on strengthening the airline's

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The Delta Air Lines counter at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport will soon say *sayonara* to Saipan when it ends its flight service from Narita to Saipan effective May 6, 2018.

BEA CABRERA

Kilili hopes US Senate acts quickly on CW bill

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) said it would be ideal if the U.S. Senate could act quickly on the CNMI-Only Transitional

Worker program extension bill so that the bill could move through U.S. Congress faster.

During his opening remarks at yesterday's public hearing, Sablan told U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources chair

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) that he hopes the U.S. Senate could act quickly on S. 2325, Murkowski's bill to extend for 10 years the transition period of the CNMI, effectively extending essential programs such as

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Tinian Mayor Joey Patrick San Nicolas, Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente, and members of the Northern Marianas Business Alliance Corp. have their picture taken following the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing on S. 2325, the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act.

DOL: 22 industries affected by CW shortfall

Following the initial collection of data in December for CW-1 visa non-renewals, Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente noted that businesses that have responded to the survey so far fit into 22 different industries.

Benavente reiterated that data on U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services non-renewals, which have been either misclassified or put into general occupational categories, is currently

being compiled and mitigated.

"Our primary focus is getting information from the businesses who have received denials for their CW permit applications. At this time, the data shows a total of 238 businesses that DOL was able to survey that fit into 22 different industries," Benavente said.

The 22 different industries are air

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Inos withdraws from gubernatorial race

Daniel O. Quitugua, chairman of the NMI Democratic Party, informed the media on Wednesday that former mayor and senator Joseph "Joe" S. Inos has, with deep regret, withdrawn as the Democratic Party candidate for governor in the November general election for personal and family reasons.

» Democrat chairman still confident of winning ticket in November

In a letter to the Democratic Party, their presumptive gubernatorial candidate said the decision gave him a "heavy heart," but despite having "repeatedly subscribed my very best to gain [my family's] approval," and having "discouraged the basic foundation of a family," he was un-

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INSIDE



BUSINESS

Casino mogul Steve Wynn resigned Tuesday as chairman and CEO of Wynn Resorts amid sexual misconduct allegations.

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ASIA

A rescue crew on Wednesday was trying to free two people from a hotel whose ground floor caved after a strong earthquake hit near Taiwan's east coast and killed at least four people.

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LIFE & STYLE

Director Quentin Tarantino has responded to Uma Thurman's allegation that he put her life in danger with a dangerous car stunt on "Kill Bill," calling the incident "the biggest regret of my life."

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Local

NMC summoned for financial review

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
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REPORTER

A Senate committee has summoned the management of Northern Marianas College to report on their finances pertaining to delegation appropriation as well as Federal Emergency Management Agency funding.

In a Feb. 6, 2018 letter, Sen. Justo Quitugua (Ind-

Saipan), who chairs the Senate Committee on Education and Youth Affairs, summoned NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez to report on NMC expenditures.

Citing appropriations of Saipan Local Law 19-6 and 19-8, NMC was allocated a total of \$1.28 million for the repair and renovation of facilities on NMC damaged by Typhoon Soudelor and for

an electrical system upgrade as well as a water and sewage system.

According to Quitugua, S.L.L. 19-6 provided that NMC would report to the delegation chair on a quarterly basis on the expenditure of funds.

The letter added that the committee knew of NMC par-



Fernandez

taking in the FEMA Alternative Pilot Project, which utilizes Public Assistance Grant Funding awarded to NMC for the construction of new facilities rather than the repairing of present facilities constructed over 50 years ago.

"As chairman for the Sen-

ate Standing Committee on Education and Youth Affairs, it is pertinent that the committee be kept abreast of the expenses of our sole college to ensure continued progress in providing a safe, secure, and sustainable campus conducive to the learning environment of our students," Quitugua stated, adding that the information would be used as measure to address the needs of NMC.

NMC is requested to respond to the letter three days prior to their meeting, which is to be conducted next Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2018 at

10am in the Senate chamber on Capitol Hill.

Quitugua further requested for NMC to submit expenditure report of funding allocated under S.L.L. 19-6 and S.L.L. 19-8; and expenditure report and status of funding awarded or reimbursed under the FEMA Alternative Pilot Project and other FEMA grants; the current status of repairs, renovations, and construction of facilities on the NMC campus that have been completed, ongoing, or pending; and "any other pertinent information regarding this matter."

MVA: Korean carriers flying to Saipan remain strong

By **BEA CABRERA**
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REPORTER

Korean carriers that fly from Incheon to Saipan and Busan to Saipan remain strong amidst Delta Air Lines' pullout announcement on Saipan and Palau routes effective May 6, 2018.

The current Korean airlines that have flights to Saipan are Jeju Air, Asiana, T'Way Air, and Jin Air. These airlines fly the night schedule from 12 midnight to 6am.

Saipan Tribune learned that Jin Air will temporarily suspend its service for three months starting March due to aircraft rotation and maintenance.

Jin Air will be back in service on June.

In an earlier interview, Marianas Visitors Authority Chris Concepcion said that the Korean market has been the CNMI's most consistent visitors throughout the year (2017) and marketing efforts definitely play an important part in that.

"2017 has been a phenomenal year for tourism in the Marianas, buoyed by strong air service and demand from Korea and China," he said.

"For 2018, MVA is looking to solidify its hold on what it calls the Big 3 source markets—South Korea, China, and Japan," he added.



Concepcion

NEW SAIPAN FIRE LANE REGS

Effective Feb. 26, 2018, the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services will start implementing on Saipan new fire lane regulations established by Public Law 19-69.

■ The obstruction of a designated fire lane is prohibited and is considered an immediate hazard to life and property.

■ Designated fire lanes along sidewalks and streets are painted red. The lanes are marked "No Parking—Fire Lane."

■ Vehicles parked in fire lane will be towed.

■ A police officer or firefighter shall issue a citation for violation.

■ If an operator refuses to sign citation, he/she will be arrested.

■ The person charged with the violation may give

his or her written promise to appear in court by signing at least one copy of the written traffic citation.

■ Contact DFEMS Fire Station in Susupe at 664-9004 to verify if car is towed.

■ Pay citation at the Superior Court and provide proof of payment to DFEMS.

■ Citation is \$150 per violation; towing fee is \$220 for vehicles weighing less than 11,000 lbs, and \$350 for vehicles weighing more than 350 lbs.; and daily impoundment rate is \$20. Fines/fees change because of daily impoundment rate.

■ DFEMS will issue release order to impound lot.

■ If the lien owner of the vehicle fails to claim within 30 days from date of impound, the vehicle will be auctioned.

Source: DFEMS

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CHCC: OPA report didn't use updated info

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has pointed out that the Audit Recommendations Tracking System the Office of Public Auditor recently released for CHCC didn't cite up-to-date information.

Had it done so, it would show the collaborative work of OPA and CHCC in the current revenue cycle, according to the corporation's chief financial officer, Derek Sasamoto, in a statement.

"Though we always appreciate OPA's efforts and the work that they do, we simply desire an update that shows in good faith the collaborative work of OPA and CHCC," he said.

OPA, an independent agency of the government, audits three aspects of public funds given to government agencies: receipt, possession, and disbursement of public funds.

In a report at the end of December, OPA outlined several recommendations for CHCC, but admitted that "OPA was unable to thoroughly review most of the documents provided and make proper determinations for the corresponding recommendations."

CHCC said that no status changes could be made to the 11 recommendations because the current information was never reviewed by OPA.

The next report will be released in June 2018.

The 11 recommendations that OPA gave to CHCC were the following:

- To develop and implement policies and procedures for prompt verification of patient's insurance coverage and eligibility; discuss payment requirements, payment reminders and options with patients at the time of registration;

- Collect upfront payments from all patients regardless of coverage unless it is certain that the insurance or guarantor will pay the bill in full. If patients are unable to make payment, CHCC should discuss payment options and ensure follow-up procedures are performed. OPA finds this resolved.

- Require doctors and nurses to prepare the information necessary to estimate bill at the time the patient is discharged;

- Develop a plan of action that addresses the backlog in coding, billing, collection, and posting payments;

- Seek technical assistance that would result in the assessment of the current IT structure and the acquisition of a comprehensive accounting and billing system;

- Develop and implement

policies and procedures effectively to address claim denials and rejections. OPA finds this resolved.

- Provide staff with relevant documentation and train-

ing and develop and implement policies and procedures effectively to review third-party reimbursements;

- Adopt and publish a list-

ing of all procedures and related fees in one complete schedule;

- Update contracts with insurance companies;

- Reconcile billings cre-

ated and payments received from contractor. Any discrepancy should be resolved and the overall effect should be analyzed and documented; and

- Comply with CHCC's procurement regulations when seeking the services of an outside billing and collection agency.



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HYUNDAI

DOL

From Page 1

carriers, car rentals, cleaning services, consulting services, farming, health care, house rental, poker arcades, restaurants, salons, tour services, auto shops, catering, construction, dive shop operators, gas stations, hotel, manpower, help supply, security, power plant, retail, snack mobile, and transmitting facilities operation.

"Drawing from this data sample, we can see a total of 1,581 U.S. qualified workers; 1,693 CW workers, 427 CW-1 petitions that have been denied by USCIS; and 313 CW-1 petitions that are

currently pending at USCIS. Almost all employers who replied to the survey were able to disclose their workforce data. However, some fields of the survey were not readily available at the time of the survey. It was found that, in some cases, employers would have information on CW-1 petitions that were denied but not how many U.S. qualified workers were currently employed. The positions and the quantity of positions being denied by USCIS were also not available by the employer. At the same time, an approximate number and generalization of job classifications were given," Benavente noted.

She added that aside from the quantitative data

retrieved from businesses, comments were also drawn from the survey.

"Many businesses shared similar concerns and action plans on how to mitigate the involuntary adjustment to their workforce. The collective testimonies of the employers fall into a wide spectrum of extenuating responses. Comments ranged from making recruiting adjustments to even closing down their business. Mitigation such as downsizing operations and services or cancelling expansion were also stated. Many employers shared their hardships in labor recruitment and the deprivation of a substantial labor pool to that of the U.S. which the CNMI must abide by the

instilled federal labor laws," she said.

Gil San Nicolas, director of Enforcement, said that while many businesses shared the same plight with plans of alleviating labor shortfalls, businesses still had very distinct circumstances in which hiring foreign labor was needed.

"With the lack of a skilled labor pool specialized in a specific vocation and lack of training facilities within the Northern Marianas, the difficulty of recruiting one employee from abroad to relocate to the CNMI poses as an obstacle in hiring. Sacrificing a certain wage and benefits certainly outweighs the option of working in the CNMI," San Nicolas said.

Benavente revealed that one such instance is an employer in the refrigeration business unable to keep his foreign workers.

"This employer has been attempting for many years to recruit new workers and keep his current employees. He has acquired his skill-set in a span of six years and still has difficulty finding an employee with even the partial set of skills that is needed in his workplace. Many of the potential candidates abroad simply could not afford to relocate to the CNMI and adjust to a different standard of living.

These locations range from the mainland U.S. to the surrounding Pacific territories," she said.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who encouraged the private sector to report their labor data, stated that many employers appreciate the efforts of educational institutions such as the Northern Marianas Trades Institute and Latte Training Academy but that the reduction impact would not be sustainable.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

INOS

From Page 1

able to secure the necessary family unity and blessing.

The former mayor of Rota said in his letter, "Of paramount importance deeply rooted in our unique culture, most especially for a gubernatorial candidate, is to seek advice, consultation, and blessing from our family. These prerequisites require, patience, understanding, and discussion of substantive issues. Moral

and material supports are the very cores to advance a candidate's aspiration for a most sensational public office."

"While we are saddened by former mayor Inos' decision, we fully understand and respect his reasons," Quitugua said. "Family is very important in our culture and these islands, and a divided family is a pain and burden few of us can bear."

"We are gratified that former mayor Joe Inos has pledged his commitment to 'the People's Party' platform

and his personal support in the coming election," he added.

"This year the public demands candidates whose passion and commitment to public service is exemplary. We Democrats fully understand the public interest in this matter and the importance of selecting persons whose qualifications and personal traits are worthy of the public trust. We take these concerns very seriously and truly value the honor of peoples' trust," Quitugua said.

"As a party, we are very for-

tunate in the number of people we have found who embody that quality, and that are committed to making change to improve all of our lives here in the Commonwealth and restore integrity and confidence in our government," he added.

Quitugua said the Party Central Executive Committee will be meeting soon to decide on how to move forward. "We have very good options, and the people of the Commonwealth can expect an announcement in the near future," he said. (PR)

network to U.S. gateways and beyond.

The pullout comes a month after Delta discontinued its service between Narita and Guam.

The Office of the Governor, Marianas Visitors Authority, and travel agencies on Saipan were informed Tuesday by Delta headquarters in Atlanta about the planned pullout.

In a separate statement, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said he is genuinely disappointed by this decision.

"I remain committed to the Japan market and the historical and cultural ties between the Marianas and Japan. We will be meeting with Delta Air Lines next week to reiterate our partnership, but we will keep our options regarding the route," he said.

Torres said the CNMI is "very grateful" to Delta for its 29 years of service to the CNMI and its partnership over the decades.

"It is our collective goal to remain on top of the shifting markets here in the Pacific that includes making sure that visitors from Japan can continue to visit our islands, and our people continue to have viable air transportation through the Narita route, which is a historical one for many of our friends and families," he added.

Last November, Torres and MVA managing director Chris Concepcion met with Delta Japan executives in Tokyo, Japan and were assured that the Narita-Saipan route will be maintained.

However, this current decision was made by the Delta headquarters in Atlanta as part of its U.S. mainland route expansion.

Concepcion said that Delta's pullout from Micronesia is "indeed unfortunate" news.

"We are saddened because Delta and its predecessor, Northwest Airlines, have been serving the CNMI for 29 years... We understand that this is purely a business decision made by Delta headquarters in Atlanta as they've de-

cided to take the B757 used on the Saipan-Narita route back to the U.S. mainland where they will utilize it on other routes within their wider network," he said.

"The MVA and Delta have been working closely the past few years to make this route profitable and we managed to make it so the past couple years. But, after all is said and done, we recognize that the Japan market itself is shrinking dramatically in our region and worldwide," Concepcion added.

The shrinking Japanese market that travels to the Pacific and Micronesia was prevalent and the service flights cuts were inevitably foreseen.

Concepcion said that MVA saw it with Delta's pullout in Guam, United Airlines' nearly 50-percent reduction in flights between Japan and Guam, and now with Delta's flight suspension for Saipan and Palau.

Fortunately for the CNMI there are already a number of airlines that have expressed an interest in taking over the route, Concepcion said.

"The MVA is aggressively working toward a launch soon... We are also hopeful for a brighter future with the shift in market dynamics happening today. The [low-cost carrier] revolution is spreading like wildfire around the world, and going forward we foresee this trend picking up quickly in the Marianas and Micronesia, given that Japan is essentially a short-haul, three-hour flight from the CNMI," he said.

"We extend our gratitude to Delta for their service to the CNMI. We know that if there is opportunity for them to return in the future, they will do so, since our ties remain strong," he added.

Concepcion calls on MVA partners such as the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Commonwealth Development Authority, and other agencies to work on ensuring that flights remain profitable to operate in the CNMI.

"The MVA cannot do this alone. It is critical that we work together going forward," he said.

KILILI

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the CW program and the E-2C program under it as well.

"My hope is that the Senate would act so quickly that the [legislation] hearing at the U.S. House would pick up chairwoman Murkowski's S. 2325," he said, adding that the U.S. House is looking to conduct its own public hearings sometime near the end of February 2018.

Sablan on the same day of S. 2325's introduction last Jan. 19, 2018, simultaneously introduced H.R. 4869, which is the same bill, to the U.S. House.

Sablan explained that the rush to pass the bill was to cater to the permits that would be cut by the 2019 CW program cap, since U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services set it at 4,999 for this coming fiscal year 2019; a nearly 5,000 reduction in permitted slots.

The CW program allows permits to be renewed at least 180 days, or six months prior to the new fiscal year, meaning come April 1, 2018, only 4,999 of the previously 9,998 for fiscal year 2018 would be approved—not including those who wish to work in the CNMI for the first time.

Sablan specified in his remarks that suddenly implementing massive cuts to the

foreign workforce of the CNMI would have immediate grave effects on the economy, especially since it is now "flush with growth after many years of decline."

"...[U.S.] Congress works well against a deadline; and I believe we could move quickly now," said Sablan.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said in his statement that based on USCIS statistics, vital occupations usually taken up by CW workers have steadily been reducing as the Commonwealth government exerts efforts to reduce reliance on foreign labor.

"In fiscal years 2012 and 2013, the top two job classifications listed were for marketing and sales, and food service occupations. In 2016, the two top jobs were in construction and building trades, which speaks toward the growth of our economy and the demand for new construction. Since 2013, Northern Marianas College successfully launched its four-year bachelor's degree in business with training in accounting. This timeframe saw accounting positions in the CW program fall from the eighth highest in demand to 15th in 2016," said Torres, adding that the CNMI has made gains toward reducing the reliance to foreign labor workers since the "beginning of the transition period."

In her opening statements,

committee chair Murkowski said that while she believes that S. 2325 is a "good product," she made clear that it is called a transition period for a reason.

"...While I am willing to support extending the transition period, I remain committed to the intent of the transition, which is to increase the number of U.S. workers in the CNMI economy while reducing the dependence on foreign labor," Murkowski said.

The committee Ranking Member U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) said in her statements that she and the bipartisan, bicameral working group led by Murkowski and included Sablan and Torres has been working over the past year on a "longer term solution to the expiring CW program."

"This bill [S.2325], in my view, effectively promotes continued economic growth for the Marianas, but also imposes additional safeguards to make sure that protections are in place for workers. Those who mistreat their employees will suffer the consequences," she said, voicing her support for the labor protection provisions in the bill.

"The federal government must ensure that the Northern Marianas has the tools to grow its economy while at the same time ensuring protection of fundamental labor rights," she added.

Sen. Manglona's motion to exclude siblings' handwriting expert from testifying denied

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Superior Court Judge Pro Tempore David A. Wiseman has denied Sen. Paul A. Manglona's (Ind-Rota) motion to exclude his siblings' handwriting expert witness from testifying at trial in connection with their court battle over a piece of land on Upper Capital Hill.

In the same order issued on Monday, Wiseman denied a motion to dismiss Paul Manglona's lawsuit filed by his siblings Priscilla M. Torres and Thomas A. Manglona.

Torres and Thomas Manglona are co-administrators of the estate of their late mother, Bernadita A. Manglona.

Wiseman ruled that Paul Manglona's lawsuit will proceed to trial on Feb. 20, 2018, so that the court can hear the merits of this case and the matter to be expeditiously resolved.

Wiseman ordered co-administrators Torres and Thomas Manglona to supply Paul Manglona with a summary of facts and opinions underlying their expert's opinion on or before Feb. 9.

The judge ordered Paul Manglona to submit a notice of a counter expert, if any, on or before Feb. 12.

Wiseman expressed anew his disappointment that the parties in the case continue to engage in procedural

brinkmanship, which does little to advance this suit to its ultimate resolution.

As to the motion to exclude co-administrator's expert, Wiseman said the entire case centers on the genuineness and validity of the deeds in question.

Therefore, Wiseman said, allowing the expert to testify at trial does not prejudice Paul Manglona.

However, the judge agreed with Paul Manglona's point that he has not been provided with the type of expert report and information, which can be expected in this type of case.

As such, Wiseman said, co-administrators Torres and Thomas Manglona should supply Paul Manglona with reasonable information about the expert and his analysis of the facts and circumstances, which has led to his expert opinion.

Wiseman reiterated that he expects the parties to work cooperatively with each other to ensure that both sides are ready to proceed to the Feb. 20 trial.

On the motion for dismissal for Paul Manglona's failure to join other parties in the lawsuit, Wiseman said the appropriate course is to amend the caption in the case—not dismissal.

Wiseman said dismissal at this stage would be a waste of valuable judicial resources. He noted that he has already made

travel arrangement, including hotel accommodations, some of which are nonrefundable.

He said the sum of dismissal would be that Paul Manglona's complaint is refilled with the minor change that co-administrators Torres and Thomas Manglona are named and not the estate.

"For all other purposes the case would proceed in the exact manner," said Wiseman, adding that minor technical shortcomings, which both parties agree can be cured, does

not justify the waste of judicial resources.

Paul Manglona is suing Torres, Thomas Manglona, and their mother's estate over the disputed 4,181-square-meter property on Upper Capital Hill.

The senator asked the court to declare him the fee simple owner of the property by virtue of a deed of gift on July 11, 1985, and that neither the defendants have any rights to do it.

In their answer to the law-

suit, Torres and Thomas Manglona, through counsel, asserted that their brother, Paul Manglona, does not inherit entirely the disputed land as their mother's signature had been forged.

Paul Manglona, through counsel Mark Scoggins, then moved to exclude his siblings' expert witnesses, specifically hand writing expert, on the grounds that court deadline has come for submitting in court their experts.

Torres and Thomas Manglona, through counsel Samuel I. Mok, then moved to dis-

miss the case as they accused the senator of violating two court orders.

Mok asked the court to dismiss Paul Manglona's lawsuit against his siblings on the basis that the senator has failed to join necessary and indispensable parties to this case.

Last Nov. 16, Wiseman granted Torres' and Thomas Manglona's motion to join indispensable parties. Wiseman also ordered that the estate be dropped as a named party to this case.

Wiseman heard the motions last Feb. 2.

OAG proposes diversion program former OPA employee in theft case

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General has submitted to the Adult Diversion Program under the Office of Adult Probation for consideration the theft case filed against a former Office of the Public Auditor employee, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

Assistant attorney general Jonathan Glass Jr., counsel for the government, informed the Superior Court about the submission to the Adult Diversion Program of the case against Violita Diaz during a status conference last week.

OAG's action prompted Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho to reset the status conference for Feb. 28 at 9am to see if Diaz qualifies for diversion.

Diversion means the OAG is not going for conviction. Rather, a defendant will pay a certain amount and perform community services, and other conditions if he or she qualifies.

If Diaz completes the di-

version program, she will not have a criminal conviction.

Last Jan. 24, Diaz failed to show up at a status conference. Camacho ordered that a bench warrant with a \$500 cash bail be issued if Diaz fails to appear at the next status conference on Jan. 31.

At the Jan. 31 status conference, Diaz appeared with her counsel, Chief Public Defender Douglas Hartig.

The OAG filed last October an information that accused Diaz of stealing \$900 from OPA.

Assistant attorney general Heather P. Barcinas stated in the information that Diaz took the money from OPA's petty cash on Aug. 8, 2016. Diaz was at the time an employee of OPA.

No other details were provided in the information.

Saipan Tribune learned that Diaz used to work as an administrative assistant with OPA. She left OPA in 2016.

Diaz was not arrested as she was only summoned to appear in court.

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CUC wants clarity on bill about subsidy

By BEA CABRERA

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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. wants Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) to clarify a bill that would use the casino tax to subsidize the fuel adjustment charge and the actual electrical use of CUC's residential customers.

In a meeting last week, the CUC board talked about ambiguities in Dela Cruz's House Bill 20-146, with CUC executive director Gary Camacho saying the original appropriation was toward the FAC, but now the House is looking to incorporate the usage aspect as well.

"This will actually pay off both components of the electrical bill outside of any reconnection or disconnection accounts as FAC base rate and usage are considered into appropriation for all residential customers," he said.

However, Camacho said the bill should state clearly if the subsidy from the casino busi-



Commonwealth Utilities Corp. legal counsel Jim Sirok and CUC executive director Gary Camacho discuss the ambiguities in House Bill 20-146 at the CUC board meeting on Thursday.

BEA CABRERA

ness gross revenue tax pertains only to active residential customers or whether inactive accounts are included.

"These are questions that are coming in all day long at

customer service and we are trying to get our specifics so when the funding comes it will be under immediate application but we need to clearly define the line," he said.

CUC legal counsel Jim Sirok shared the same sentiments that the bill has to define clearly if aside from the FAC and usage rate, if the \$7 base rate is also included.

"Gary and I have been talking about this because we have not submitted comments yet. If you look at this proposed House bill, it's for the FAC and usage, so when you

look at that, it doesn't include the \$7 base rate," he said.

Sirok said it makes better sense if the base rate is included in the subsidy.

"I don't know if the board would like us to comment if the base rate should or should not be included. It would make it a lot easier for all if the base rate were included because it will just wipe it off the total electric thing, instead of having to carry the \$7 charge," he added.

Camacho said they are going to propose that the \$7 base rate be included in the subsidy when they respond.

"I'm hoping to organize our comments where we will put what we believe needs to be included and we will present it to the board for review," he said.

"It will greatly help us too [at customer service] in so far as our billing is concerned because it [will] reduce a lot of phone calls from our customers asking the same question," he added.



Members of the Civil-Military Coordination Council, led by Gov. Eddie Calvo and Rear Adm. Shoshana Chatfield, commander, Joint Region Marianas, meet at the Ricardo J. Bordallo Governor's Complex in Hagatña, Feb. 7. Representatives of local and U.S. federal agencies also were at the meeting.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Guam civil-military council meets

ASAN, Guam—Gov. Eddie Calvo and Joint Region Marianas commander Rear Adm. Shoshana Chatfield met last Feb. 7, signaling the first reconvening of the Civil-Military Coordination Council

since May 2011.

Representatives of local and federal agencies also were at the meeting at the Ricardo J. Bordallo Governor's Complex in Hagatña.

"This council provides a fo-

rum for the Department of Defense, government of Guam and federal agencies to have an open discussion regarding construction projects that affect the military and local communities," Chatfield said. "We are grateful

to our partners from the government of Guam for their continued partnership, interagency coordination and the opportunity to address issues and concerns with a unified voice."

Representatives of Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas gave an overview of military projects on

U.S. Naval Base Guam, Andersen Air Force Base, and in the village of Dededo.

"What's good inside the base is also good for outside the base," Calvo said during the discussion of the Four Pillars, which is commonly referred to as the One-Guam approach. "A strong construc-

tion industry will ensure our island's economy grows. And a strong economy will support a better quality of life for all of our residents."

The CMCC was created to monitor impacts and advise DOD on the pace and sequencing of proposed construction in Guam. (PR)

Power outage on Feb. 10

There will be a scheduled power interruption on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2018, from 7:30am to 12pm.

The purpose of the power interruption is to de-energize primary lines to allow Com-

monwealth Utilities Corp. line crew to replace four wooden power poles with concrete poles along As Gonno Road near the Coral Ocean Golf Resort.

The pole replacement task

is part of an ongoing Hazard Mitigation Project aimed at strengthening the power distribution system with the replacement of 787 wooden poles with concrete poles. The goal of the project is to mitigate the power distribution system against typhoons

and other environmental catastrophes that may seen when Typhoon Soudelor happened in 2015.

CUC has replaced 338 of 787 wooden poles. The remaining 449 wooden poles will be scheduled for replacement.

The Coral Ocean Golf Resort will be affected by Saturday's power interruption but no water well will be affected.

No wastewater lift station will also be affected.

Because of the scale of work that will be performed, CUC

asks travelers to take alternate routes or to exercise caution when driving through the affected areas. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. **(CUC)**



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Free health clinic on Sunday

The Lions Club International District 204, Region 2 will hold its Annual Health Fair on Sunday, Feb. 11, 2018. Registration for the free health services will begin at 8am and end at 12pm at the Mt. Carmel Daidai Social Hall. Services will include blood pressure/hypertension check, glucose testing, vision check with the distribution of free reading glasses, along with cancer and health awareness information. This is a free service. For more information call 989-2545. **(PR)**

Kagman High updates

Kagman High School will be releasing its 3rd Quarter Progress Report on Monday, Feb. 12, 2018, from 4pm until 6pm in the school cafeteria. Kagman High School will also be passing out student's progress reports on Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018, from 5pm until 7pm at the Natibu Sports Association in Tanapag. Parents and

guardians are encouraged to attend one of these two events. Call the school at 237-3921, 664-4100, or 664-3911 if you have any questions or concerns. **(PR)**

Cancer survivors, caregivers support meeting today

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the Commonwealth Cancer Association support meeting today, Feb. 8, 2018, starting at 5:30pm at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. Guest speaker will be Ronald D. Sablan, director of the CNMI Medical Referral Program. To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarinas@gmail.com. **(PR)**

Military training at the former Adm. Nimitz Golf Course

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training

at the former Adm. Nimitz Golf Course in Barrigada beginning Feb. 6 until Feb. 9, from 8am to 7pm. These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training. **(PR)**

Administrators sought for S&NISWCD

The Department Of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture, and the Saipan and Northern Islands Soil and Water Conservation District would like to inform farmers of the Kagman Commercial Farm Plot that there will be a meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2018, at 9am at the Division of Agriculture Kagman station. DLNR is looking for farmers to be administrators of the S&NISWCD. If you are interested or would like to get information on this matter, call Diane Gabaldon at 256-3319. **(PR)**

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Possible change in water pressure

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. enters the final phase of a project to eliminate the direct feed water wells to the Koblerville community.

CUC has been working in this area to improve water pressure in the distribution

system since 2012. It expects to complete switching its customers in the Koblerville, Agangan, As Gonno, and Afetnas areas to the Isley tank service area today, Feb. 8.

By serving water from the Isley tank, customers will get

more reliable pressure and water service hours.

Customers will not see the pressure spikes overnight or during low demand periods, resulting in a much more consistent system. Customers will continue to receive 24-hour water after the switch is completed. **(CUC)**

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Member FDIC

Domenech caught buying stock in company that contracts with DOI

By MARK HAND
THINKPROGRESS.ORG

Doug Domenech, a top official at the Department of the Interior, worked as a political appointee at the agency during the George W. Bush administration when it was rife with corruption. The official is now coming under scrutiny for his own questionable actions as a Trump administration appointee.

A month after winning confirmation to serve as assistant secretary for insular affairs at the Interior Department in September 2017, Domenech purchased between \$15,001 and \$50,000 worth of shares in Compass Minerals, a mining company that does business with the department, Politico reported Monday. In 2017, the Interior Department, for example, paid the company \$15,000 on a contract.

As assistant secretary for insular areas, Domenech coor-

dinates federal policy for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The office also is responsible for administering and overseeing grant assistance to the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau.

Compass Minerals produces salt, potash, and fertilizers. Along with the Interior Department, the company has won contracts with the departments of Defense, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs over the past seven years. Domenech was confirmed to his position at the Interior Department on September 18 and reportedly purchased the shares in Compass Minerals in late October.

Last fall, Domenech also sold more than \$15,000 in shares of Chevron. However, he still owns shares in pipeline company Enbridge Inc. and smaller stakes in pipeline company Energy Transfer Partners

and refiner Valero Energy, according to Politico.

Domenech's investments raise questions about conflict of interest and whether the Interior Department will steer contracts to these companies or implement policies that could boost the companies' share value. Last week, Trump's head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention resigned on the heels of a Politico report that she had purchased stock in a tobacco company soon after taking her job, which oversees smoking-cessation programs.

The Interior Department had not responded to a request for comment from ThinkProgress at the time this article was published. Politico reported that Compass Minerals does not do business in the Virgin Islands or other territories that Domenech

directly oversees.

Domenech's bosses have faced serious corruption charges at each step of his career in government. Most recently, Domenech served as secretary of natural resources in Virginia under Gov. Bob McDonnell (R), where the governor was a vocal support-

» **Official draws scrutiny of his own after a career of working for scandal-plagued bosses.**

er of drilling off the Virginia coastline. McDonnell was convicted of public corruption charges in 2014 for receiving gifts from a political donor and was sentenced to two years in prison. But the former governor never served any time after the U.S. Supreme Court vacated the sentence.

During the Bush administration, Domenech served as White House liaison and deputy chief of staff to Inte-

rior secretaries Gale Norton and Dirk Kempthorne. An Interior Department inspector general report found that employees at the agency had received improper gifts from energy industry officials under Norton's leadership.

Steven Griles, Norton's top lieutenant at Interior, resigned after an investigation by the department's Office of Inspector General concluded he had met with former clients in the fossil fuel industry in violation of an agreement he signed upon getting confirmed to deputy Interior secretary. After leaving Interior, Griles was sentenced to 10 months in prison for his role in the Jack Abramoff scandal.

In 2009, the Justice Department opened a criminal investigation into whether Norton illegally used her position to steer lucrative oil leases to Royal Dutch Shell PLC, the company she worked for after leaving the Interior Department. The investigators sought to determine whether Norton violated a law that bars federal employees from discussing employment with a company if the employee is involved in decisions that could benefit that company. The Justice Department ultimately declined to press charges.

As with Norton, Domenech's top boss in the Trump administration, Ryan Zinke, is under investigation for his potential misuse of agency funds and other questionable actions. Zinke also is facing criticism

for his ownership of shares in a firearms company, a financial interest he did not disclose when nominated last year, Itai Vardi reported for HuffPost.

The private Montana company, PROOF Research Inc., manufactures and sells firearms and advanced weapons materials. This previously undisclosed holding came to light after numerous decisions in his first year in office that benefited the hunting and gun industries. This included an alleged effort to silence National Park Service Acting Director Michael Reynolds' objections to several provisions in National Rifle Association-backed legislation that would loosen regulations on hunting within park boundaries.

After leaving the Bush administration, Domenech lobbied for oil and energy companies. Prior to being named to the Trump administration, he was the chair of the Koch-funded Texas Public Policy Foundation's (TPPF) Fueling Freedom Project. The project's goals include explaining "the forgotten moral case for fossil fuels" and ending the EPA's regulation of carbon dioxide.

The TPPF also employs Kathleen Hartnett-White, who failed to win Senate approval to serve as head of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) due to her radical beliefs on fossil fuels and climate science. On Monday, the White House officially withdrew her nomination to lead the CEQ.

Water outage in Garapan

There is currently a water service interruption to all customers in Garapan from the Hotel Street Area to True Value Hardware on Beach Road and on Chalan Pale Arnold Road (Middle Road) from the 99 Cents Store to the Gualo Rai intersection.

The cause of the service interruption is due to the low water tank level of the Puerto Rico tank. Water operators of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. are currently performing an assessment of all water wells that supply water to the tank and are assessing the areas for large leaks.

CUC encourages its customers in the Garapan areas to practice water conservation

measures, such as turning off water tanks when they are full and/or leaking and repairing any known water leaks on the customers' side of the water meter.

Water service hours are as follows for the Garapan Areas:

■ Lower Navy Hill to the Commonwealth Health Center Corp.: 24-hours

■ Garapan from Hotel Street to True Value Hardware (Beach Road): 6am to 10am

■ Garapan from the 99 Cents to the Gualo Rai intersection (Middle Road): 6am to 10am

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. (CUC)



NMC

Docomo Pacific recently donated \$3,000 in cash and prizes that will be featured at the upcoming annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament on Saturday, March 3, 2018. In the photo are Docomo employees, led by Docomo Pacific vice president Dino Manning, back row, third from left, and NMC staff and students led by NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, back row, fourth from right.

Docomo donates \$3,000 to NMC Golf Tournament

To help support Northern Marianas College and its efforts to expand higher education opportunities for CNMI residents, Docomo Pacific recently donated over \$3,000 in cash and prizes to the NMC Foundation 15th Annual Golf Tournament fundraising event.

The tournament will be held on March 3, 2018, and will be the first major tournament of the year.

"NMC plays a significant role in helping to train and build local workforce capacity," said Dino Manning, vice president/general manager of Docomo Pacific. "We are pleased to assist in the foun-

dation's fundraising efforts and are excited to be part of this year's event again. We are looking forward to a great tournament at Laolao Bay."

"In addition to their contribution, Docomo Pacific also recently donated a charging station so our students can be connected," said NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez. "We are grateful for the company's continuing support by donating to the foundation's golf tournament."

"We are extremely thankful for Docomo Pacific's support in this year's tournament," said Mary Tenorio, NMC Foundation president.

The golf tournament is the NMC Foundation's signature event that raises funds to support NMC's academic programs and services.

The 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open golf tournament will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018, at the west course of Saipan Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. Showtime is at 6am and the shotgun start will be at 7am. The tournament will follow a medal play format.

First place winners in the men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights will each receive \$500, while \$300 and \$200 will go to the second and third place finish-

ers, respectively.

Hole-in-one prizes include a Tacoma Toyota Pre-Runner from Atkins Kroll, a Honda HR-V from Joeten Motors, \$10,000 in cash from Marianas Insurance Co., and \$5,000 in cash from Pacifica Insurance. The tournament will also feature many other items as raffle prizes like smartphones, hotel stays, meal gift certificates, and much more.

Registration and payment can be made at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort or the NMC Cashier's Office. For sponsorship opportunities or registration information, visit marianas.edu or call 237-6833. (NMC)

Scheduled power outage today on Tinian

There will be a scheduled partial power interruption on Tinian in the areas of Marpo Valley, Carolinas Heights, Marpo Heights I & II and West Tinian Airport today, Feb. 8, 2018, from 8am to 5pm.

The purpose of the interruption is to de-energize the primary lines to safely remove

and replace pole top pins with insulators, power poles and transformers in the power distribution system.

For more information, contact the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Tinian (433-9264/5) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. (CUC)

NMTI pleads for supplemental funding

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Trades Institute is urging the Senate to pass a supplemental budget bill so it could continue operating in the CNMI.

NMTI chief executive officer Agnes McPhetres urged the Senate last Friday to adopt Rep. Angel Demapan's (R-Saipan) House Bill 20-147 to enable the trade school to pay the salaries of NMTI instructors.

According to McPhetres, the Commonwealth Scholarship Office has cut NMTI's share of the annual CW fees by 50 percent, devastating the

» Scholarship Office reportedly cut NMTI's share of CW fees by 50 percent

trade school due to the lack of money to finance the salaries of its teachers.

"Enrollment has grown from [about] 300 to 599 this year, so we had to hire more instructors. If we had known from the beginning that [the Scholarship Office intended to cut our budget], we would not have opened all those classes," McPhetres said, adding that NMTI was made

to believe that the CNMI Scholarship Office would be giving NMTI at least the same amount of funding it gave NMTI last fiscal year.

"The first allotment [the CNMI Scholarship Office] gave us was in the middle of October 2017, but the classes started in August 2017," she said.

McPhetres said that NMTI asked for a little over \$1 million in CW funds. "We only got \$500,000-some," she added.

While NMTI lacks about \$500,000 in funding just to continue operations, H.B. 20-147 allocates \$275,000 for the trade school.

Starting fiscal year 2018,

the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres had designated the CNMI Scholarship Office to administer the CW fees.

In a previous statement, the Torres administration said that

assigning the CNMI Scholarship Office to administer the fees is intended to make the disbursement of money more efficient. The CNMI Department of Labor used to administer the CW fees.

Last Jan. 31, 2018, the House passed Sen. Justo Quitugua's (Ind-Saipan) bill to convert NMTI into a public institution to allow for the allocation of funds from the general funds.

USCIS to hold employment-based immigration seminar on March 9

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will host an "Employment-Based Immigration Seminar" with Kamana Mathur, a community relations officer with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in Honolulu.

The seminar will be held at 9am on Friday, March 9, in the

Chamber's conference room on the third floor of the Marianas Business Plaza.

The morning session will be free of charge but limited to one registered attendee from each company on a first come, first serve basis. Registered attendees may submit questions regarding Employment-Based

Immigration to executive@saipanchamber.com before Feb. 16. The questions will be compiled and forwarded to Mathur so that she may adapt her seminar materials to address the questions of CNMI businesses.

Make your reservations by calling (670) 234-7150. (PR)

Power 99 signs on as a sponsor of NMC Foundation Golf Tournament



NMC

Power 99 recently donated over \$5,000 in radio advertisements to Northern Marianas College in support of the annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament that will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018.

To help promote the Northern Marianas College Foundation's upcoming golf tournament, Power 99 recently donated more than \$5,000 in radio advertisements to market the event.

The 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open Golf Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, March 3, 2018. The event will be the first major golf tournament of the year.

"Power 99 has always been a staunch supporter of NMC Foundation and its goal of expanding educational opportunities in the Northern Marianas," said James Nelson, general manager of Power 99. "We are happy to be part of this year's tournament as we have been for the past several years."

"The success of the NMC Foundation Golf Tournament for the past 15 years has large-

ly been due to the generosity of companies like Power 99," said NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez.

The golf tournament is the NMC Foundation's signature event that raises funds to support NMC's academic programs and services.

"We are always excited to collaborate with Power 99 in our promotional efforts for the golf tournament," said Mary Tenorio, NMC Foundation board chair. "Thank you, Power 99, for your continued support."

The 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open golf tournament will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018, at the west course of the Saipan Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. Showtime is at 6am and the shotgun start will be at 7am. The tournament will follow a medal play format.

First place winners in the men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights will each receive \$500, while \$300 and \$200 will go to the second and third place finishers, respectively.

Hole-in-one prizes include a 2017 Toyota Tacoma from Atkins Kroll Saipan, a 2017 Honda HR-V from Joeten Motors, \$10,000 in cash from Marianas Insurance Co., and \$5,000 in cash from Pacifica Insurance. The tournament will also feature many other items such as raffle prizes like smartphones, hotel stays, meal gift certificates, and much more.

Registration and payment can be made at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort or the NMC Cashier's Office. For sponsorship opportunities or registration information, visit marianas.edu or call 237-6833. (NMC)

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Opinion

Hafa Adair!

Saipan Tribune

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Our advice to Eagles fans: 'Act like you've been there before'

The trophy has been hoisted. The green confetti has fluttered. And the Macy's mannequins have been liberated from their window displays.

Wait, what?

It's been a topsy-turvy time in Philadelphia since the Super Bowl LII clock ran down to zero Sunday night and the Eagles secured a 41-33 victory over the New England Patriots. Thousands of fans took to the streets in mostly orderly fashion, though the kidnapping of mannequins and more than one light pole were reported.

And we haven't even had the parade yet.

The Eagles and their adoring fans embraced the underdog nature of all this while denying the Tom Brady-led Patriots a sixth Super Bowl win.

The Eagles had never won a Super Bowl, not since the game was first held in 1967. They had only reached the big game twice before in that time.

For crying out loud, the Eagles hadn't won a NFL championship since Dwight D. Eisenhower was living in the White House. That was 1960, 58 long years ago. But we stopped crying out loud a while back.

Underdogs? Sure. The players donned doggie masks, and we all followed along, barking mad at the disrespect, amid plenty of predictions of another parade for the Patriots.

But there was something different about all this, a casual confidence in a city diagnosed for decades with an incurable inferiority complex. The Eagles and their fans weren't complaining about being underdogs. They were embracing it, owning it, laughing at it.

In short, not so inferior after all.

The fans in Boston call Brady the GOAT, short for "greatest of all time."

So there was the GOAT, sitting on the turf in the fourth quarter, after being sacked by the Eagles defense and stripped of the football in a play that sealed the Eagles victory.

And now the Eagles have that big, shiny, silver trophy. They join the Phillies, Flyers and 76ers — professional sports franchises that have all logged championship seasons.

This is a city of winners, a place where the big thing blooms and thrives. Take notice, Amazon. Get on board.

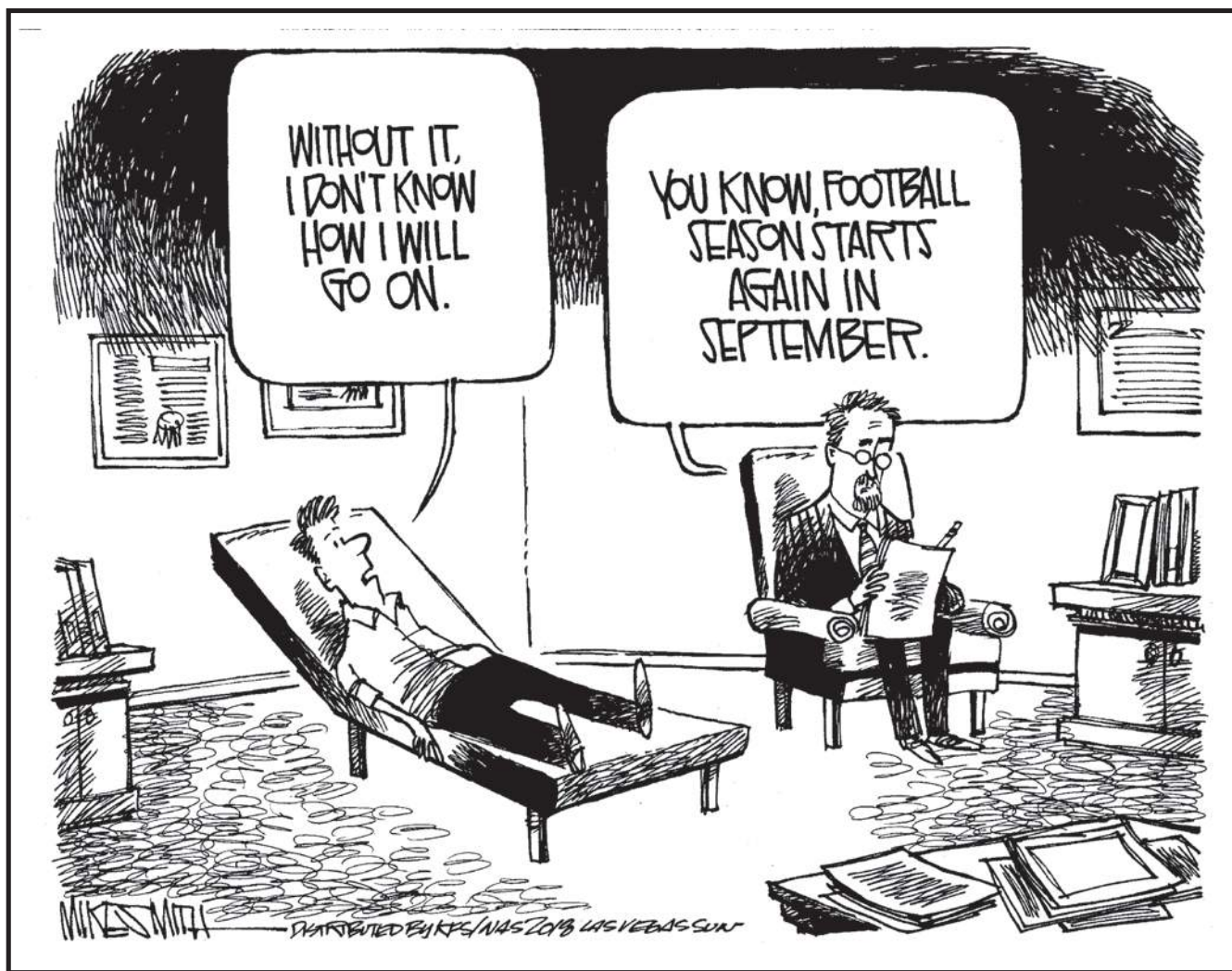
The pope came calling in 2015, packing the Ben Franklin Parkway with faithful. The Democratic National Convention filled the city in 2016. The NFL held its draft on the Parkway in 2017.

And now, finally, at long, long last — a Super Bowl. And a parade, which will march north from Broad and Pattison on Thursday to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

For some, all this was too much. And bad behavior followed.

There was some looting at a convenience store. A car was tipped over. A hotel's canopy collapsed under the weight of frenzied revelers. There were some arrests in the city. It got a little crazy, for sure.

See **EAGLES** on Next Page



Millennials can make America whole

“Build a wall and my generation will tear it down,” read a sign held by a young anti-Trump protester at a recent rally, a cry reiterated by Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy III in his response to President Donald Trump’s State of the Union address. That sentiment could serve as a slogan for millennials, now in their 20s and early 30s, who are well placed to serve as a bridge between the older adult population and the Americans who are now in their teenage years or younger.

One major fault line in our divided America is generational. The last three presidential elections, for example, showed a sharp split along the dimension of age. In each, those over 40 voted primarily for the Republican candidate, while younger people voted primarily for the Democrat. This divide, evident in areas other than politics, has demographic and cultural underpinnings.

Forty-four percent of millennials are racial minorities: Latinos, blacks, Asians and other smaller groups. Three out of 10 are first- or second-generation Americans, and 1 out of 6 are multilingual. Millennials are thus on the front lines of the nation’s diversity shift, between the baby boomers and Gen Xers who are more white, and the post-millennials, sometimes called Generation Z, who are less white. By the year 2035, millennials’ elders will be 65 percent white, and those younger than them, who will make up nearly half of the population, will be 46 percent white.

Whereas older whites express fears of what the changing racial and ethnic demography means for the nation’s future and possibly their own safety—fears fanned by Trump’s signature positions on immigration and policing—millennials are known for their tolerance.

Nearly 1 in 7 millennial marriages is multiracial, compared to 1 in 20 among baby boomers when they were the same age. In contrast to adults over 35, a majority of millennials believe that, since the 1950s, American culture and way of life have mostly changed for the better. They are also more likely to believe that immigrants strengthen the country and that America’s best days lie ahead.

It’s not just millennials of color who support a more diverse America as well as the politicians who promote it. Millennial whites, far more than older whites, also espouse favorable views of immigration and the nation’s future.

If millennials are to succeed economically, and to lay the social groundwork for the highly diverse generations that follow, we urgently need to invest in a variety of education and safety-net programs. While millennials as a whole have achieved higher levels of post-secondary and college educations than their elders, black and Latino millennials have fared decidedly worse than their white peers on those measures, as well as on home own-

By **WILLIAM H. FREY**
Los Angeles Times

William H. Frey is a senior fellow with the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution and author of the report *The Millennial Generation: A Demographic Bridge to America’s Diverse Future*. He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.



ership and income—often a consequence of under-resourced schools and community services.

The current administration is doing the opposite of what’s necessary. Fueled by an older political base that does not view diverse millennial families as their children and grandchildren, Trump and the Republican-controlled Congress tried to gut the Affordable Care Act and passed a tax law that will dramatically increase the federal debt, paving the way for cuts in domestic programs that would aid young families.

Damage will continue unless, and until, the demographic clout of millennials and their successors is more fully realized—clout potentially delayed at the ballot box by racially-targeted voter suppression and gerrymandering.

Political leaders need to view millennials and their children, both native and foreign born, as the core of America’s future labor force and prepare them for a more globalized economy. At the same time, they should make the case to their too often fearful political base that they have a co-dependent relationship with this racially diverse America. While millennials will benefit from government investments in their well-being today, older Americans will benefit from their contributions to Social Security and Medicare for decades to come.

Perhaps the most important attribute of millennials as a bridge to America’s diverse future is their relentless optimism, especially minority millennials who actively embrace the American Dream. A 2017 GenForward survey found that Latino, Asian and black millennials are more likely than whites to say they will do better financially than their parents.

By example and as advocates, millennials of all racial backgrounds will undoubtedly continue to make the case that investing in a more inclusive, younger America is essential to the nation’s economic success and can only help today’s older populations. Older Americans should listen, and help make the country whole.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

PRO

Trump hit a grand slam and touched all bases

DALLAS—By virtually any traditional measure—as well as a few nontraditional measures—President Donald Trump's first State of the Union (SOTU) address was a great success. Let us count the ways.

The polls: A CBS poll released shortly after the speech reported that 75 percent of those watching approved of it, and 80 percent said the president was trying to unite the country. Importantly, two-thirds said the speech made them feel proud.

In a Politico/Morning Consult poll, 35 percent of those watching gave the president an "A" for his speech and 25 percent gave him a "B." Only 26 percent gave him either a "D" or "F."

Those numbers would be good for any president's State of the Union address. But given Trump's usually low approval ratings, that's a very positive response.

The audience: The Nielsen Company reported that 45.6 million people watched the State of the Union message on TV. That was the sixth largest SOTU audience, a solid turnout, though not a record.

Of course, Nielsen's numbers only reflected cable and broadcast TV networks. However, more and more people are bypassing TV and viewing such events online, so total viewership likely was much larger than the official number.

The tone: Trump appeared presidential in his demeanor, gracious to the opposition—supporting several policy initiatives that Democrats want—and he stayed on message. All three tasks can be challenging for this president. So when he achieves them, it's a yuuge success.

Ironically, Trump's presidential stature during the speech was magnified, rather than diminished, by the Democrats' sour faces. It's common for the opposition party to remain in their seats more and applaud less than the president's party. But in this case, Democrats looked bitter and dejected—even when the president highlighted the achievement of widely shared goals such as low black and Hispanic unemployment rates.

The catchy phrases: State of the Union addresses seldom rise to the level of high oratory. The speeches are more notable for a few catchy phrases that stick in people's minds, and Trump's was no exception.

One of Trump's best was the comment that "Americans are dreamers, too," which took a potent political issue—illegal aliens brought to the U.S. as children, referred to as "Dreamers"—and turned the notion on its head, making it apply to American citizens who also dream of achieving their goals.

The human connection: Since Ronald Reagan's 1982 address, SOTU speeches have increasingly put a human face on political and policy issues.

Trump drew attention to several people sitting in the gallery, including a young man who

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Tribune News Service

Merrill Matthews is a resident scholar with the Institute for Policy Innovation. He holds a doctorate in the humanities from the University of Texas.



put flags on veterans' graves, two families whose daughters were killed by gang members and a North Korean who escaped to freedom.

Every president incorporates the practice in their SOTU address these days, but none more effectively than Trump.

The wins: With 45 million-plus people watching, State of the Union addresses provide a platform for a president to tout his successes. Trump had a number of them, especially with respect to the economy, and he wasn't bashful about sharing them.

But the successes have to be experienced to be effective. President Barack Obama used to boast about economic recovery and the benefits of his health care law, but those claims just didn't ring true for millions of Americans.

By contrast, Trump's claim of a surging economy is reflected in news headlines and growing public optimism—and completely believable.

The State of the Union has become a political showcase, where Americans who seldom pay much attention to politics can hear the president make the best case he—and eventually she—can for the country and his policies.

If the public comes away from that address informed, encouraged and proud, it was a successful speech. The polls show Donald Trump did exactly that.

Q: Was President Donald Trump's first State of the Union speech successful?



President Trump gestures as delivers his first State of the Union address in the House chamber of the U.S. Capitol to a joint session of Congress Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2018 in Washington, as Vice President Mike Pence and House Speaker Paul Ryan applaud. AP

EAGLES

From Page 10

To this, we're reminded of an old bit of advice, often attributed to the late Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi: "Act like you've been there before" when you score.

CON

Too many alternate facts, too few moments of truth

WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump's first State of the Union speech to Congress was by any reasonable assessment a disaster.

While the historic use of the State of the Union has certainly varied over the decades, much more often than not presidents have used this unique opportunity to not only lay out a vision for policy, but also to lay out that vision in broad unifying terms.

The goal, one can assume, being to provide an opportunity for the public at-large to connect to the president's policies and feel good about items in the agenda for which they may not have already had a supportive connection.

At times, Trump perhaps achieved this goal in a phrase or sentence or two. However, as he is far too often guilty of, he immediately descended into clearly divisive language obliterating any momentary goodwill that might have been gained.

This is not to say that no other president has hit partisan tones or that none have appealed nakedly to their ideological base. But, the dedication to division that Trump seems unable to escape by far outpaces anything his predecessors employed.

By **DON KUSLER**
Tribune News Service

Don Kusler is national director of Americans for Democratic Action, the nation's most experienced progressive advocacy organization.



sors employed.

The blatant division alone would be enough for me to emphasize. Trump's first State of the Union was so poor that my red editing pen is just getting started.

Another clearly faulty part of the president's speech was the assault on truth through a series of blatant lies and moving on to a healthy dose of misrepresentation of fact.

Fact checkers around the globe were in frantic overtime throughout and following the president's delivery finding dozens of such problems.

Of course, past presidents have certainly not been completely honest. Where Trump makes his divergence is in the frequency and depth of his misrepresentations.

Whether it was false claims about job creation, United States energy exports, the size and impact of recent tax cuts or the steady stream of misrepresentations related to immigration, this speech was long on distortions and short on reality.

Of course this pattern, coming from an administration that entered its term a year ago by introducing the phrase "alternative facts", should be no surprise even if it is wholly frustrating to those hoping for a functional government and society.

The question we are seeking an answer to, however, is how to move past or around a president so dedicated to division and distortion?

While I'd be delighted to share a simple fix, the last point about the president's speech is an enormous roadblock to progressing past his divisive and distorted nature.

Every breath, phrase and decision Donald Trump takes and makes is dedicated to one aim. Dedicated to the service of one person. Dedicated to the service of one ego. His.

Division allows his fragile psyche validation. Distortion further creates division and the alternate reality by which he can see his every move as "tremendous" and anyone who disagrees as wrong.

Quite unfortunately, many of the people closest to Trump are unable or unwilling to challenge his ego or his insecurity.

Instead they employ some combination of silence, misguided encouragement, protection or deflection and continue to enable this personally and professionally dangerous behavior.

As the leader of the Trump organization perhaps this could simply be normal operating, but as president of the United States the stakes are too high if they continue unchecked.

The State of the Union speech delivered last week was far too divisive, far too distorted from reality, and far too self-serving to one person's massive and insecure ego.

If those were the aims of the speech, then perhaps it was an internal success but as a useful exercise in unifying the United States and moving our nation toward a successful future it was and is a tragic failure of leadership.

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Volunteers take part in Read Aloud Day on Tinian



Dr. Rita Sablan, former education commissioner and literacy coach, reads to a 2A class at the Tinian Elementary School.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Roselyn Balagtas, a student from the Tinian Junior Senior High School's co-op program, reads to the 3A class

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tinian Elementary School recently had parents, community leaders, and teachers read to its students in celebration of the World Read Aloud Day.

Dr. Clare Camacho, a consultant with the Public School System and literacy coach assigned to Tinian, was on campus and read to TES students in Kindergarten up to the fourth grade.

One of TES' own parent and teacher, Monica Sanchez, read to the 3B class. A parent and school counselor, Maryann Dela Cruz, read to the Grade

5A. Michelle Quichocho, an AmeriCorps student from Tinian Junior Senior High School, read to the 1B class. Rose Lyn Balagtas, another student from the Tinian Junior Senior High School's co-op program, read to 3A. Dr. Rita Sablan, former education commissioner and literacy coach for Tinian Elementary School, was also on campus and read to grades 2A and 4A. Tinian High School teacher and parent, Regina Palacios, read for 1A while another Tinian High School teacher and parent, Frances

Santos, read to 2B.

Tinian Elementary also had a surprise on World Read Aloud Day. Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) visited the Tinian campus and donated books for the school's library.

"We extend our appreciation to the ELA committee for organizing the event and the parents and community for coming into our classroom to celebrate World Read Aloud Day with our children," the school said in a statement. **(PR)**



Teacher and parent Monica Sanchez reads to a 3B class

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Dr. Clare Camacho reads to a Kindergarten class.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Michelle Quichocho, AmeriCorps student from Tinian Junior Senior High School, is reading to a Kindergarten class.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



School counselor and parent Maryann Dela Cruz reads to a 5a class.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Frances Santos, Tinian Junior Senior High School PTSA secretary, reads to a 2B class



Regina Palacios of Tinian Junior Senior High School reads to a 1A class.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

Steve Wynn resigns amid sex misconduct allegations

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Casino mogul Steve Wynn resigned Tuesday as chairman and CEO of Wynn Resorts amid sexual misconduct allegations.

The Las Vegas-based company in a statement said Wynn's resignation was effective immediately. It came less than two weeks after the Wall Street Journal reported that a number of women said Wynn harassed or assaulted them and that one case led to a \$7.5 million settlement.

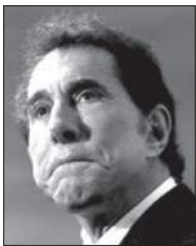
"In the last couple of weeks, I have found myself the focus of an avalanche of negative publicity," Wynn said in a written statement. "As I have reflected upon the environment this has created—one in which a rush to judgment takes precedence over everything else, including the facts—I have reached the conclusion I cannot continue to be effective in my current roles."

The billionaire has vehemently denied the report's allegations, which he attributes to a campaign led by his ex-wife. An attorney for Elaine Wynn has denied that she instigated the news report.

Wynn now faces investigations by gambling regulators in Nevada and Massachusetts, where the company is building

a roughly \$2.4 billion casino just outside Boston. The company earlier said a committee of independent directors would investigate the allegations that surfaced Jan. 26.

Ahead of the announcement, shares of Wynn Resorts' China arm, Wynn Macau Ltd., were suspended from trading on the Hong Kong stock exchange on Wednesday morning in Asia. Gambling regulators in Macau, the world's biggest casino market, said last week they were concerned about



Wynn

the reports and had met with executives of Wynn Macau to get more information and the company said it would cooperate with any requests. Wynn Macau operates two casino-resorts in Macau, which is the company's biggest source of profits.

A wave of sexual misconduct claims against prominent figures in entertainment, media and politics gained momentum last fall in the aftermath of articles detailing movie producer Harvey Weinstein's decades of alleged rape and harassment. But Wynn is the first CEO and founder of a major publicly held company to come under scrutiny since the Weinstein allegations surfaced.

Wynn is a titan in Sin City and played a major role in the revitalization of the Las Vegas Strip in the 1990s. He built the Bellagio, Treasure Island and Mirage before he sold his Mirage Resorts company in 2000. Two years later, he founded Wynn Resorts, which now operates two luxurious casino-resorts in the city and is in the process of building a lake and hotel development called Paradise Park on the site of a former golf course.

Wynn's two Macau casinos include the older Wynn Macau near the former Portuguese colony's historic old town, and the Wynn Palace, which in 2016 became the latest opulent resort to open in the new district of Cotai, joining lavish developments by rivals including Las Vegas Sands.

In announcing Wynn's resignation, the company's board of directors made clear it had done so "reluctantly."

"It is with a collective heavy heart, that the board of directors of Wynn Resorts today accepted the resignation of our founder, CEO and friend Steve Wynn," said Boone Wayson, who was named non-executive chairman of the board. Matt Maddox, the company's president since 2013, was named CEO effective immediately.

Shutdown less likely as Senate closes in on budget agreement

WASHINGTON (AP)—Buoyed by the sudden likelihood of a budget pact, lawmakers are on track avoid a repeat of last month's government shutdown—though President Donald Trump unexpectedly raised the possibility of closing things down again if he can't have his way on immigration.

"I'd love to see a shutdown if we can't get this stuff taken care of," Trump declared Tuesday, repeating the sentiment for emphasis.

Trump's comments were strikingly disconnected from the progress on Capitol Hill, where the House passed a short-term spending measure Tuesday night and Senate leaders were closing in on a larger, long-term pact ahead of a Thursday night deadline. The broader agreement would award whopping spending increases to both the Pentagon and domestic federal programs, as well as approve overdue

disaster relief money and, perhaps, crucial legislation to increase the government's borrowing limit and avoid possible default.

Democratic leaders have dropped their strategy of using the funding fight to extract concessions on immigration, specifically on seeking extended protections for the "Dreamer" immigrants who have lived in the country illegally since they were children. Instead, the Democrats prepared to cut a deal that would reap tens of billions of dollars for other priorities—including combatting opioids—while taking their chances on solving the immigration impasse later.

Tuesday night's 245-182 House vote, mostly along party lines, set the machinery in motion. The six-week stopgap spending bill contains increases for the military that long have been demanded by Trump and his GOP allies. But the measure appears increas-

ingly likely to be rewritten by the Senate to include legislation implementing the brewing broader budget pact.

House Democrats canceled a scheduled three-day retreat on Maryland's Eastern Shore to develop a strategy for the midterm elections. A spokeswoman blamed the cancellation on "the pressing issues Congress will likely vote on over the next three days."

The budget negotiations, conducted chiefly by the Senate's top leaders, Republican Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and Chuck Schumer of New York, have intensified in recent days—and the looming government shutdown at midnight Thursday added urgency to the talks. In addition to the military and domestic spending, the deal taking shape would approve overdue disaster relief money and, perhaps, crucial legislation to increase the government's borrowing limit and avoid possible default.

Nation

Trump continues to paint immigrants as criminals

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump is continuing his habit of painting immigrants as criminals, highlighting gang connections, calling family reunification a national security threat and bemoaning the death of a pro football player involved in a car accident with a man living in the country illegally.

Speaking to law enforcement officials at the White House on Tuesday, Trump singled out the MS-13 gang, which is believed to be behind 25 killings on New York's Long Island in the past two years, and has become a prime target of the Trump administration.

"We've really never seen anything quite like this, the level of ferocity, the level of violence, and the reforms we need from Congress to defeat it," Trump told law enforcement officials and lawmakers, eventually threatening another federal government

shutdown if Democrats don't agree to pass an immigration package he said would help keep gang members out.

"If we don't get rid of these loopholes where killers are allowed to come into our country and continue to kill ... if we don't change it, let's have a shutdown," Trump suggested. "I'd love to see a shutdown if we don't get this stuff taken care of."

Trump's latest threat is part of a pressure campaign he has been waging to try to get Democrats to sign onto a sweeping immigration plan that they've rejected. The president wants billions for a southern border wall, major cuts to legal immigration, and more money for interior enforcement and other changes in exchange for granting a pathway to citizenship for up to 1.8 million young immigrants living in the country illegally.

Earlier Tuesday, Trump called on Democrats to "get

tough" on immigration, citing the death of Indianapolis Colts linebacker Edwin Jackson, who was killed in a suspected drunken-driving crash involving a Guatemalan citizen living illegally in the U.S.

"So disgraceful that a person illegally in our country killed @Colts linebacker Edwin Jackson," Trump tweeted. "This is just one of many such preventable tragedies. We must get the Dems to get tough on the Border, and with illegal immigration, FAST!"

Trump has also continued to criticize the nation's legal immigration system, insisting that limiting immigrants' ability to sponsor their family members to join them in the country, and ending a visa lottery aimed at promoting diversity, will make the country safer.

"In the age of terrorism, these programs present risks we can no longer afford," he said in his State of the Union speech.

Rail industry says key safety technology not due until 2020

WASHINGTON (AP)—The railroad industry is downplaying expectations that a safety technology that could have prevented recent deadly train crashes will be in operation across the country by the end of the year.

Indeed, freight and commuter rail officials speak as if there never was any plan to complete their work on the technology known as positive train control, or PTC, by Dec. 31.

Congress required in 2008 that railroads adopt PTC and gave them seven years to do the job. When it became clear that wasn't enough, Congress gave them another three years. The discussion at the time was that a few railroads might need even more than three extra years, and provisions were added to the legislation to allow railroads that showed substantial progress, but couldn't meet the new deadline of Dec. 31, 2018, the ability to obtain extensions of up to two additional years.

Officials for the trade associations representing the seven major freight railroads operating in the U.S. and the nation's commuter railroads now say they view Dec. 31 as the date by which railroads must meet several PTC milestones to qualify for

an extension rather than the ultimate deadline.

The Transportation Department has little choice but to grant the extensions as long as railroads meet the milestones, said Kathryn Kirmayer, the Association of American Railroads' general counsel. One milestone is that freight railroads have PTC in operation on half their route miles where it's required.

"By the end of 2020 is the absolute deadline everybody has to have it installed and implemented, which means operating everywhere they are required to have it operating," she said.

Members of Congress expressed frustration that railroads appear to be backing off this year's deadline.

Congress never intended the extensions be used "to allow railroads that have dragged their feet to just blow off the mandate," said Rep. Peter DeFazio of Oregon, the House transportation committee's senior Democrat. Sen. Bill Nelson of Florida, the Senate commerce committee's senior Democrat, said, "Every railroad should be taking the recent deadly train accidents seriously and doing everything they can to meet the 2018 deadline."

Quarterly progress reports

filed with the Federal Railroad Administration show some railroads have nearly completed their work, while others have made little progress.

Randy Clarke, the American Public Transportation Association's vice president for operations, said three or four of the nation's 27 commuter railroads have already received extensions past Dec. 31 and more extensions are expected.

"We are actively working as an industry to get everyone to the milestones necessary for extension or to completion," he said. "We know not every agency is in the same place and some have more complications than others."

The National Transportation Safety Board has said the technology could have prevented a collision between an Amtrak train and an out-of-service CSX freight train on Sunday near Cayce, South Carolina, and the derailment of an Amtrak train in December near Olympia, Washington. Five people were killed and dozens more injured in the two crashes.

Amtrak has said it will complete its work on PTC by the end of the year, but its trains often operate on tracks owned by other railroads like the CSX.

Asia

Taiwan quake kills four

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—A rescue crew on Wednesday was trying to free two people from a hotel whose ground floor caved after a strong earthquake hit near Taiwan's east coast and killed at least four people.

The shallow, magnitude 6.4 quake that struck late Tuesday night caused at least four buildings in worst-hit Hualien county to cave in and tilt dangerously.

Four people were killed and 225 others injured, while more than 140 were unaccounted for, Taiwan's official Central News Agency reported.

An employee at the Marshal Hotel was killed after the ground floor caved in, CNA said.

A rescue worker told Taiwanese broadcaster TVBS that rescuers were working to save two other employees as family members waited nearby.

A maintenance worker who was rescued after being trapped in the Marshal Hotel's basement said the force of the earthquake was unusual.

"At first it wasn't that big ... we get this sort of thing all the time and it's really nothing. But then it got really terrifying," Chen Ming-hui told CNA after he was reunited with his son and grandson. "It was really scary."

Other buildings shifted on



Rescuers are seen entering a building that collapsed onto its side from an early morning 6.4 magnitude earthquake in Hualien County, eastern Taiwan, Wednesday, Feb. 7 2018.

their foundations and rescuers used ladders, ropes and cranes to get residents to safety.

Video footage and photos showed several midsize buildings leaning at sharp angles, their lowest floors crushed into mangled heaps of concrete, shattered glass, bent iron beams and other debris. Firefighters could be seen climbing ladders hoisted against windows as they sought to reach residents inside apartments.

The force of the tremor buckled roads and disrupted electricity and water supplies to thousands of households, the National Fire Agency said.

Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen moved to reassure the Taiwanese public that every effort would be made

to look for survivors. In a post on her official Facebook page, Tsai said she arrived in Hualien on Wednesday to review rescue efforts.

Tsai said she "ordered search and rescue workers not to give up on any opportunity to save people, while keeping their own safety in mind."

"This is when the Taiwanese people show their calm, resilience and love," she wrote. "The government will work with everyone to guard their homeland."

CNA said all but two of the 145 people who could not be reached might be in the Yunmen Cuiti building, a 12-story apartment building, though it said it did not immediately have an estimate of how many were trapped.

to the security implications of their presence in the waters, Roque said.

While the Philippines could halt foreign scientific research, foreign ships could freely pass through the waters under an international maritime treaty but could not tap its resources or lay submarine cables, Roque said.

Critics have questioned why the Duterte administration allowed a group from China to undertake scientific research in the waters given Manila's long-simmering territorial conflict with Beijing in the South China Sea. China has also defied and refuses to comply with an international arbitration ruling that heavily favored the Philippines in the disputed South China Sea.

Rep. Gary Alejano, a former marine officer, has said the government's decision to give Chinese surveyors access to Benham Rise was "careless and absurd" and may have undermined the country's national security. He expressed doubts the Chinese would adequately share the information they gathered as required by the Philippine government.

and continental shelf further out in the ocean.

Philippine security officials raised concerns about intrusions when a Chinese ship was monitored crisscrossing the waters early last year, drawing public attention to the territory, which some believe could have undersea gas and oil deposits aside from its rich fishing grounds.

Benham Rise lies on the other side of the Philippine archipelago from where Manila, Beijing and four other governments have been locked for decades in territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

Duterte's spokesman, Harry Roque Jr., told a news conference Tuesday that all foreign scientific groups, including from China, Japan, South Korea and the United States, have concluded their research work in the waters and the president wants Filipinos to carry out research from now on.

About 30 existing research permits would be deemed revoked and foreign scientific research groups may reapPLY but should get additional permission from Duterte's national security adviser due

PH wants foreign research ships out of its waters

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered an end to all foreign scientific research missions in a vast expanse of waters off the country's northeast and called on the military to "chase out" unauthorized vessels, an official said Tuesday.

Duterte issued the order in a Cabinet meeting late Monday after doubts were raised over the country's sovereign rights in the offshore region called Benham Rise, which the government has renamed Philippine Rise, said Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Pinol.

"Let me be very clear about this: The Philippine Rise is ours and any insinuation that it is open to everybody should end with this declaration," Pinol quoted Duterte as telling Cabinet members.

Benham Rise is an off-shore frontier facing the Pacific Ocean that is approximately 24 million hectares (59 million acres) in size and is in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, an area where nations have internationally recognized exclusive rights to exploit fish and fuel resources,

World

Rebel areas pounded by Syrian forces despite cease-fire call

BEIRUT (AP)—Russian and Syrian government forces launched a new wave of airstrikes and shelling on Tuesday, plunging the besieged area just outside of Syria's capital of Damascus into a spiral of violence and despair.

At least 55 civilians were killed in what activists described as one of the deadliest days in the eastern Ghouta region in over a month. Ten towns, home to nearly 400,000 people trapped by the violence and a tightening siege, were bombed or shelled.

The United Nations called for an immediate, monthlong cease-fire in order to deliver critical humanitarian aid and medical care to civilians across the country.

Streets in the stricken area were covered in all-enveloping dust as one strike after another hit the same neighborhoods.

Images of blood-soaked children and adults competed

with video of rescuers carrying white body bags or pulling survivors from the debris of destroyed homes. Sirens and wailing mixed with the relentless sound of airstrikes as residents of eastern Ghouta were unable to keep up with the onslaught.

One video showed a survivor with torn clothes and a bloody face running from a bombed building toward an ambulance. "Rescue me!" he yelled.

A visibly shaken man named Saeed emerged from a cloud of dust holding his infant son, Ibrahim, who had a streak of blood on his head. Saeed had managed to pull the 3-month-old child out of the wreckage of their home after an airstrike, according to Syrian Civil Defense workers, known as the White Helmets.

Nearly 200 people were wounded, and rescuers said many of those probably will not survive because of lack of medical supplies.

"Minute after minute, the number of casualties rises," a rescuer from the White Helmets said in a video from eastern Ghouta posted on the group's Facebook page. "No area at all in Ghouta is safe. ... We don't know what to say."

It was the second day of an intensified assault on the region. On Monday, at least 28 people were killed, while on Sunday, a suspected chlorine attack left a dozen people suffering from breathing difficulties.

The region has been under intense attack since the end of December as the government of President Bashar Assad struggles to bring it under control.

The White Helmets said they recorded 55 deaths on Tuesday, while many more were trapped under destroyed buildings. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights put Tuesday's death toll at 70 in what it said was the highest it had recorded since December.

WORLD BRIEFS

UN experts: Islamic State militants still pose world threat

UNITED NATIONS

(AP)—The Islamic State extremist group still poses "a significant and evolving threat around the world" despite recent setbacks in Iraq, Syria and the southern Philippines that forced the militants to relinquish strongholds, U.N. experts said. Their report to the Security Council circulated Tuesday said IS "has lost its focus on conquering and holding territory" but is continuing "to give prominence to external attacks." "In future, it will focus primarily on a smaller and more motivated group of individuals willing to fight or conduct attacks," the experts said. According to the experts, the Islamic State group is now organized "as a global network, with a flat hierarchy and less operational control over its affiliates," with some members willing to cooperate with al-Qaida networks "to support one another's attacks." As a result of the changing threat, the report said the fight against the extremist group is entering a new phase "with more focus on less visible networks of individuals and cells acting with a degree of autonomy."

Tillerson: US encouraged by Colombia efforts to reduce coca

BOGOTA, Colombia

(AP)—U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Tuesday he is encouraged by Colombia's efforts to slash the amount of cocaine produced in the South American nation but cautioned that "we need to see results." In a joint appearance with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, Tillerson said that as a primary consumer of illicit drugs the U.S. shares a responsibility in combatting the narcotics trade and will continue to support Colombia's efforts. His conciliatory remarks came months after President Donald Trump threatened to decertify Colombia as a partner in the war against drugs unless the nation reversed a record surge in cocaine production. "We need to see the metrics going in the right way," Tillerson said. "That's all President Trump wants as well." A White House report found cultivation of the plant used to make cocaine rose to levels unseen in Colombia in nearly two decades of U.S. eradication efforts in 2016. The coca boom has tested the relationship between the staunch allies. The U.S. has spent more than \$10

billion in counter-narcotics work in Colombia.

Israeli troops kill Palestinian suspect in settler's killing

JERUSALEM (AP)—Is-

raeli security forces in an early morning raid Tuesday shot and killed a Palestinian suspected of being behind the killing of a West Bank settler last month, Israeli and Palestinian officials said. Israel's Shin Bet security service said the joint operation with the military surrounded Ahmad Jarrar's home in the northern West Bank. When Jarrar emerged with weapons and explosives, they shot him dead. Palestinian authorities confirmed Jarrar's death. In January, Rabbi Raziell Shevah, 35, was killed in a drive-by shooting near his home in the unauthorized settlement outpost near the West Bank city of Nablus. Since then, the Israeli military has been conducting a large manhunt in the area of Jarrar's hometown of Jenin. Israeli forces demolished his home in a previous attempt to catch him. Tuesday's killing came a day after a Palestinian fatally stabbed an Israeli man, 29-year-old Itamar Ben Gal, at a bus stop near the entrance to the West Bank settlement of Ariel, before fleeing the scene.

Environment

By **AMINA KHAN**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Scientists studying the metabolism of free-ranging polar bears in the Arctic have found out why the loss of sea ice is hurting their survival: They burn calories at a faster rate than previously thought.

The findings, described in the journal *Science*, reveal alarming facts about the polar bear's unsustainable physiology in the face of ongoing climate change.

As human-produced greenhouse gas emissions continue to fuel global warming, the Arctic sea ice levels continue to shrink by about 13.2 percent per decade. At the same time, a number of polar bear populations have been on the decline — for example, dropping by about 40 percent in the Beaufort Sea in the course of a decade.

"We've documented declines in the population, declines in the abundance, declines in the survival rates, declines in the body condition in the population," said lead author Anthony Pagano, a research wildlife biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey's Anchorage, Alaska, office. "And it appears to be related to changes in sea ice that are occurring."

But understanding the exact relationship between the loss of ice and the plight of the polar bear has been a little murky because it's difficult to track the movements of these enormous apex predators in remote regions.

"What we don't really know much about is, what are the actual mechanisms that are driving these declines?" said Pagano, who is also a Ph.D. student at the University of California, Santa Cruz. "We don't have a lot of information about really the basic biology and natural history of these animals when they're on the sea ice and how they utilize the sea ice environment."

For this study, the scientists put trackers on nine female polar bears in the Beaufort Sea region. These trackers included accelerometers and GPS-equipped video cameras to document the bears' activities. From 2014 to 2016, they tracked the bears' movements for eight to 11 days in April, the beginning of the season when the bears are usually highly active hunters, putting on the bulk of the body fat that will see them through the rest of the year.

To measure the animals' energy expenditure, they dosed the bears with doubly labeled water — water molecules whose hydrogen and oxygen atoms had been replaced with heavier isotopes with



A polar bear lies down to dry after a swim in the Chukchi sea on June 14, 2014.

AP

extra neutrons. The hydrogen atoms would leave the body in water (such as urine), as would some of the oxygen atoms. But other oxygen atoms would leave in the form of exhaled carbon dioxide (because water and carbon dioxide can easily trade oxygen atoms in the blood stream).

The amount of carbon dioxide produced reveals how hard the animals are working. So by taking blood and urine samples before and after the observation period, the researchers could track how much the polar bears had been working.

Researchers found that the bears' metabolic rates were an average of 1.6 times higher than scientists previously thought. That may be partly because the carnivores typically spend more energy than animals with herbivorous or mixed diets, pointed out John P. Whiteman of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, who was not involved in the study.

"The high energy requirements of polar bears corroborate previous hypotheses that most terrestrial Arctic habitats, lacking prey as energy-rich as marine mammals, cannot provide enough food for polar bears driven to shore by loss of sea ice," Whiteman wrote in a commentary on the paper.

That loss of sea ice is a

grave problem for polar bears, which rely on the fat-rich seals found in a sea-ice environment. Arctic land animals have very little caloric content compared with these marine mammals. Getting stuck on land simply wouldn't keep these apex predators alive.

The scientists estimated that a female bear would need to

eat either one adult ringed seal, three subadult ringed seals or 19 newborn ringed seal pups every 10 to 12 days to remain in energy balance. Those estimates make sense, given that observations show that bears kill an adult or subadult ringed seal every five days, the study authors said.

"However," the authors

wrote, "this rate of consumption would be necessary simply to energetically break even."

The bears need to do better than that during the spring-summer season if they're to survive the harsh winter, the scientists said.

It doesn't help that the loss of sea ice means that polar bears have to work harder to

stay where the food is, Whiteman pointed out.

"Further, thinner sea ice drifts faster, and polar bears have had to increase their movement rates in order to remain in their preferred habitat, incurring higher energy costs," he wrote. Thanks to the metabolic rates documented in the new findings, he added, "these costs can now be modeled more precisely."

Scientists once thought that polar bears should be able to reduce their metabolic rates when there's not much food available. The new study shows that's not the case. This means they quickly start to lose weight that is essential for survival. Four of the nine bears lost at least 10 percent of their body mass just in the days between blood-sampling events, and one even lost a significant amount of lean tissue (such as muscle). Considering that these animals typically weigh in around 400 pounds at this time of year, that's a lot of weight to lose so quickly.

"To us, it really stressed the feast-or-famine lifestyle that these bears have," Pagano said.

The findings put grim numbers to the reality that polar bears face as sea ice continues to retreat, researchers said.

"Ice loss, if unabated, will eventually cause the extinction of polar bears in the wild," Whiteman said, "but continued research is needed to understand the climate-related pressures that polar bears face. Such data-driven explanations of the biological consequences of climate change are critical for public understanding and action."

States sue Trump administration over suspension of clean water rule

By **PATRICK MCGREEVY**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Several states sued the Trump administration Tuesday to challenge its decision to suspend the 2015 clean water rule aimed at protecting lakes, rivers and streams from pollutants.

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra said the lawsuit alleges the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers acted without authority in suspending the rule, did not provide a rational explanation and did not provide required notice and opportunity for public comment.

The 2015 rule provided a broader definition of waterways to be protected.

"The Trump administration should be doing everything in its power to keep our water clean, to protect our environment," Becerra said in a statement. "Instead, it has decided to



TNS

Rafters drift along the Kern River near Kernville, Calif. SEveral states, including California, sued the Trump administration Tuesday to challenge its suspension of the 2015 clean water rule.

suspend the Clean Water Rule with cavalier disregard for our laws and deliberative process."

The lawsuit was filed in

federal court in New York. Besides California, other plaintiffs are the states of New York, Connecticut, Maryland, Mas-

sachusetts, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

Life & Style

Amid controversy, Tarantino expresses regret over Thurman

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Director Quentin Tarantino has responded to Uma Thurman's allegation that he put her life in danger with a dangerous car stunt on "Kill Bill," calling the incident "the biggest regret of my life."

But just as he was making amends for that incident—and trying to explain it—the director was being excoriated on social media Tuesday for remarks he made in a 2003 interview with Howard Stern that resurfaced online, seemingly defending Roman Polanski for having sex with a 13-year-old girl, saying the victim "wanted to have it" and was "down to party" with Polanski.

The incident involving Thurman became public on Saturday, in a New York Times column in which the actress, while also making sexual misconduct allegations against Harvey Weinstein, recounted Tarantino's persuading her to drive a car on the Mexico set that she had been



In this Sept. 29, 2003 file photo, director of the film «Kill Bill: Volume 1,» Quentin Tarantino, left, and actress Uma Thurman arrive at the premiere of the film in Los Angeles.

warned might be faulty.

Thurman told columnist Maureen Dowd that she'd expressed fear beforehand, and asked that a stunt driver do it instead. An irritated Tarantino convinced her to do it,

she said, and she crashed into a tree, suffering what she said was permanent neck damage, a concussion and damage to her knees. Video that Thurman provided the Times—provided to her by Tarantino him-

self—shows her struggling to control the car before crashing, and then being lifted out of the vehicle.

In an interview with Deadline published Monday, Tar-

antino disputed some of the details in the Times account but said he had indeed persuaded Thurman to drive the car, although not as angrily as described. He said he had driven the road himself and it had seemed totally straight, but that a decision was made for Thurman to drive it in the other direction, and somehow there was a turn that he didn't expect.

"I didn't force her into the car," he told Deadline. "She got into it because she trusted me. And she believed me." He said seeing the crash was "just horrible ... It was heartbreaking." He called it "the biggest regret of my life."

A representative for Tarantino has not responded to two requests for comment from the Associated Press.

Thurman spoke out again Monday on Instagram, reposting the crash video and acknowledging that Tarantino "was deeply regretful and remains remorseful about this sorry event, and gave me the footage years later so I could

expose it and let it see the light of day ... I am proud of him for doing the right thing and for his courage." She said she held the film's producers and "the notorious Harvey Weinstein" responsible for covering up and refusing to give her the video for years. "They lied, destroyed evidence, and continue to lie about the permanent harm they caused and then chose to suppress," the actress wrote.

It wasn't just the car incident that called Tarantino's behavior into question; Thurman also said the director himself both spit on her and choked her during scenes where it was called for in the script. Tarantino explained to Deadline that he spit on Thurman himself because he felt he could do accomplish it more efficiently than actor Michael Madsen, and that it was Thurman's idea that he choke her. "I can act all strangle-ey, but if you want my face to get red and the tears to come to my eye, then you kind of need to choke me," Tarantino explained.

Detectives vie to re-interview husband in Natalie Wood death

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Detectives want to re-interview Robert Wagner, the 87-year-old widower of Natalie Wood, as new details emerge that could lead authorities to solve the mystery of the actress's death nearly four decades later.

Wood, who starred in "West Side Story" and was nominated for three Academy Awards, was found dead in the waters off Southern California's Catalina Island. She had been drinking on a yacht with her husband, actor Christopher Walken and the boat captain on Thanksgiving weekend of 1981.

Investigators initially ruled the death accidental. But the case was reopened in 2011 after the captain said he heard the couple arguing the night of her disappearance. Wood's death has been classified as suspicious and Wagner has been named a person of interest in the case, officials said.

Detectives haven't reached out to Wagner for more than five years, Wagner's publicist and a sheriff's spokeswoman said.

Wagner, who is known for his roles in the 1980s TV series "Hart to Hart" and the "Austin Powers" movie franchise, has denied any involve-

ment in Wood's death.

His attorney has said he fully cooperated with investigators.

Several new witnesses have come forward since the case was reopened, including one who described hearing yelling and crashing sounds coming from the couple's stateroom, sheriff's Lt. John Corina said. Shortly after that, separate witnesses who were on a boat that was in the water nearby, heard a man and woman arguing on the back of the boat and believe the voices were those of Wood and Wagner, Corina said.

Will Disney's streaming service roar—or squeak?

NEW YORK (AP)—Will Disney's upcoming streaming services be the mouse that roared...or squeaked?

Disney already owns enviable entertainment properties including Pixar, Marvel and "Star Wars." Now, it's looking to add Fox's TV and movie studios as it prepares to launch two streaming services, one for sports and another focused on entertainment.

In announcing first-quarter earnings Tuesday, CEO Bob Iger said he was "excited about what lies ahead" including

the sports streaming service and the pending deal for Fox. Adjusted income of \$1.89 per share beat analyst expectations, as did revenue of \$15.35 billion, a 4 percent increase.

But the same financial report hints at trouble with the lucrative ESPN cable channel. Revenue in the cable networks business fell 1 percent to \$4.5 billion, hurt by an ESPN revenue decline. The ESPN decline resulted from lower ad revenue, though that was partly offset by growth in fees from cable distributors and

lower programming costs.

Disney announced a \$5-a-month price for the ESPN Plus streaming service, which is coming this spring.

The services represent Disney's big bet on what the next generation of entertainment will look like: more streaming and more choices. A streaming business is critical for Disney because the ESPN channel has been losing subscribers as more people ditch cable and satellite TV services and stream video on Netflix, Amazon and Hulu instead.

Winfrey picks novel 'An American Marriage' for book club

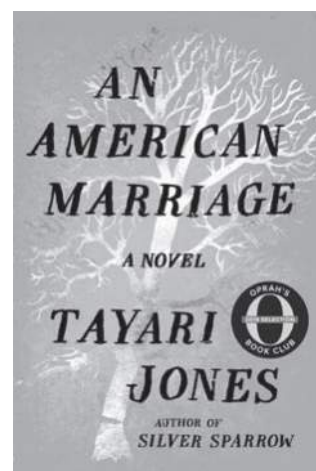
NEW YORK (AP)—Tayari Jones, whose novel "An American Marriage" has been chosen for Oprah Winfrey's book club, will always remember that phone call from last October.

She was driving in Las Vegas, expecting to hear from books editor Leigh Haber of Winfrey's magazine, "O," for which Jones has written reviews.

"But instead of Leigh's voice coming through the sound system of my car, it was Oprah's," Jones, 47, told The Associated Press during a recent interview. "I would have known that voice anywhere. And I just pulled over, in a not-so-great part of town. And people were tapping on my windows, and I was like, 'Go away, I'm trying to have the biggest moment of my life.'"

Winfrey's magazine and OWN network told The Associated Press on Tuesday that Winfrey had selected Jones' story of a young, newly married African-American couple and the husband's shocking arrest and prison term—for a crime no one he knows believes he committed—that upends their lives. Winfrey's production company, Harpo Films, is planning an adaptation.

Published Tuesday, the book was already one of the year's most anticipated novels and had reached the top



1,000 on Amazon.com before Winfrey's announcement. "An American Marriage" includes blurbs from Michael Chabon and Edwidge Danticat and was praised by The Washington Post as a compelling story that raises "punishing questions" and spins them "with tender patience." In a brief telephone interview with The Associated Press, Winfrey said Jones' novel made her respond in a similar way to other works she has picked for her club: She just had to tell others about it.

"I just get such a deep pleasure from the written word and finding out that other people feel the same way," said Winfrey. "It's kind of like sharing values. It's like saying here's an experience that I value and you're trying to get somebody to also appreciate it."

Winfrey's interview with Jones will appear in the March

issue of "O," which comes out next week. As with other recent books, Winfrey will promote it in part through Amazon.com, where a video message from Winfrey is posted and an excerpt can be read for free on the Kindle e-book device.

By midday Tuesday, "An American Marriage" was No. 2 on Amazon, trailing only Jordan B. Peterson's advice book "12 Rules for Life."

Since starting her club in 1996, Winfrey has helped put dozens of books on the best-seller lists, from contemporary works such as Colson Whitehead's "The Underground Railroad" to such classics as Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina." Recent choices have included Cynthia Bond's "Ruby" and Imbolo Mbue's "Behold the Dreamers." Winfrey said during her recent interview that she liked choosing emerging authors such as Bond and Mbue and helping "to expose them to a wider audience."

Jones' previous books include "Silver Sparrow," "The Untelling" and "Leaving Atlanta." She is a longtime Winfrey admirer and says she was once in the studio audience for one of her shows, a broadcast from the early 1990s about gay rights. Like countless authors, she had dreamed of being picked for the Oprah book club, but never let herself believe it would happen.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS**Kylie Jenner, Travis Scott name their baby girl 'Stormi'**

NEW YORK (AP)—Kylie Jenner and Travis Scott announced Tuesday they've named their baby girl Stormi. Jenner posted the name on Instagram with a photo of the baby's tiny hand grasping her pink-polished thumb. Stormi was born Feb. 1, weighing in at 8 pounds, 8 ounces. The 20-year-old Jenner is the youngest sibling in the Kardashian-Jenner clan.

Marist College revokes Bill O'Reilly's honorary degree

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. (AP)—New York's Marist College has revoked an honorary degree it awarded to former Fox News host Bill O'Reilly in 2001. Marist's trustees cited accusations of sexual misconduct and sexual harassment in a statement about O'Reilly posted Sunday on the college website. O'Reilly was fired from Fox in April. The New York Times reported in October that he had reached a \$32 million settlement with a former Fox analyst over sexual harassment allegations. O'Reilly has denied the allegations of sexual misconduct. But the Marist board of trustees said O'Reilly's firing by Fox News and the reported multimillion-dollar payout "lend credibility to the allegations against him." Marist is a private liberal arts college in Poughkeepsie.

Prince Harry, Meghan Markle to get Lifetime movie treatment

NEW YORK (AP)—Like Prince William and Kate Middleton before them, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle are now getting a Lifetime movie about their relationship. Murray Fraser and Parisa Fitz-Henley have been cast as the couple in "Harry & Meghan: A Royal Romance." It tells the story of the courtship between the British royal and American

actress. Production begins this week. The film is slated to air before the actual May 19 wedding. "William & Kate: The Movie" starred Nico Evers-Swindell and "Grey's Anatomy" actress Camilla Luddington.

No serious injuries in 'Dancing with the Stars' bus crash

AMES, Iowa (AP)—Officials say a bus carrying the touring cast and crew of "Dancing with the Stars" was involved in a large pileup during a snow storm in central Iowa, but no one on the bus was seriously hurt. Iowa State University says the Monday crash resulted in the cancellation of "Dancing with the Stars: Live! Light Up The Night" on the campus in Ames. The university says some people on the bus suffered minor injuries. Actor and singer Jordan Fisher won the ABC dancing competition last year. He tweeted: "Thanking God for the safety of our crew. Thanks for the prayers and well-wishes." The Iowa State Patrol says the bus was involved in a 19-vehicle pileup that killed one person along Interstate 80 near Grinnell, about 60 miles (96 kilometers) southeast of Ames. Another pileup of between 50 and 70 vehicles along Interstate 35 near Ames also killed one person and critically injured several others.

'Game of Thrones' creators developing new 'Star Wars' films

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Game of Thrones" creators David Benioff and D.B. Weiss are writing and producing a new series of Star Wars movies for Lucasfilm. The Walt Disney Studios said Tuesday the films will be separate from the Skywalker saga and the new trilogy being planned by "The Last Jedi" director Rian Johnson. Lucasfilm's Kathleen Kennedy said in a statement that the command that Benioff and Weiss have of complex characters and mythology will

help break new ground for Star Wars. No release dates have been set. Benioff and Weiss said in a joint statement that they are honored and a little terrified by the responsibility. They plan to get started on Star Wars when the final season of HBO's "Game of Thrones" is complete. It is set to air in 2019.

'Bachelor' star asks court to dismiss fatal accident charge

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—An Iowa farmer-turned-reality television celebrity charged with leaving the scene of a fatal accident is asking the Iowa Supreme Court to dismiss the felony charge before it goes to trial. Chris Soules, who appeared on "The Bachelor" and "Dancing With The Stars" in 2015, filed an appeal to the state's highest court on Tuesday. Soules struck a farm tractor driven by a neighboring farmer on April 24 last year in northern Iowa where he lives. He called 911 and waited for first responders but left before police arrived. The tractor driver later died. Soules contends Iowa law doesn't require fatal wreck surviving drivers to wait for police but state prosecutors say it does. A judge declined last month to dismiss the charge, which carries a five-year maximum prison sentence.

Cosby lawyers: Delay trial if other accusers get to testify

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Bill Cosby's lawyers said Tuesday that they would seek to delay his April 2 sexual assault retrial if some of his other accusers are given a chance to testify. The 80-year-old entertainer's legal team raised the prospect of postponing the retrial in court papers that opposed a prosecution bid to let jurors hear from up to 19 other women who say Cosby drugged and molested them. Cosby's lawyers argued they would need extra time to look into the women's allegations if any of them were permitted to testify. Some of the al-

legations date to the 1960s, the lawyers wrote, and are "virtually impossible to defend against" now that memories have faded,

some witnesses are dead and evidence is long gone. "Developing a defense to any of these outdated claims will require un-

usual amounts of investigative effort that cannot be completed by the present trial date," the lawyers wrote.

**NEW STAMP**

This image released by the United States Postal Service shows a postage stamp featuring Fred Rogers from the PBS children's television series "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" with his King Friday XIII puppet. The U.S. Postal Service plans to issue a new stamp on March 23 in the same Pittsburgh public television station where the program was produced. Rogers died in 2003 at 74 after battling stomach cancer.

String attached to son's gift have mom tied up in knots

DEAR ABBY: My son bought me a car in 2012. I had no idea he was doing it. He traded my car in for this newer car.

During the last five years this "gift" has been nothing but a sore spot. If I get a ding from a parking lot, it's my fault. If I let someone smoke in it, I'm unappreciative. It's always, "I do something to help you, and you're so ungrateful." I'm at the point of giving it back and riding a bus. What's the solution?

AUTO-CHALLENGED MOM IN WEST VIRGINIA

DEAR AUTO-CHALLENGED: The solution is to stand up for yourself. Your son appears to be using his "generosity" to badger you.

If you haven't told him how his comments have made you feel, you should. Point out that you can't control what happens to the vehicle when you're not in it. And once a gift is given, it's the recipient's to do with as she wishes. If a friend lighting up in YOUR car doesn't bother you, you shouldn't have to apologize for it.

As a last resort, consider trading the car in for one he has nothing to do with.

DEAR ABBY: After 31 years of marriage, I divorced my husband last year. I was very unhappily married, and am glad

to be moving forward in life. Our children suffered as well because of our marriage, and are only now beginning to make healthy choices.

My problem is that people I knew ages ago have found me on social media and want to reconnect. I'm not ready for that. I don't want to discuss what's been happening for the last 32 years. I don't want to wave them off, but neither do I want to talk about my life. It would make them uncomfortable.

I'm building a new life now, but it's still under construction. How do I respond to these well-meaning old friends?

NOT READY IN THE SOUTH

DEAR NOT READY: You do not have to reveal anything to these old acquaintances that you don't wish to. If they ask questions you feel are too personal or painful, all you have to say is you would rather not discuss it. Then change the subject.

DEAR ABBY: My husband tosses and turns, snores, talks and sings in his sleep. In short, I cannot get my sleep when we're in the same bed. He insists that I sleep with him because "if I don't, it would create a rift in our marriage." When I tell him I love him but I need to get my sleep, he says that love is only a word for me if I don't act upon it by sleeping next to him. It has gotten so bad I am thinking of leaving him. Advice?

ONLY A WORD IN OHIO

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



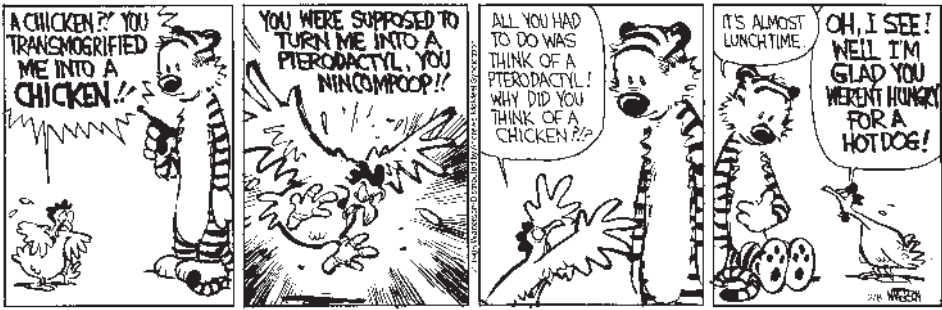
DEAR ONLY A WORD: Rather than leave, schedule an appointment for both of you with your family physician. Because your "musical" husband is tone-deaf when he hears you need a solid night's sleep, let the doctor impress upon him how important sleep is for good mental and physical health. Many happily married couples sleep in separate beds — and sometimes even separate rooms — and have great relations both in and out of bed. When there are sleep problems, sleeping apart isn't a matter of rejection; it's common sense.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby - Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



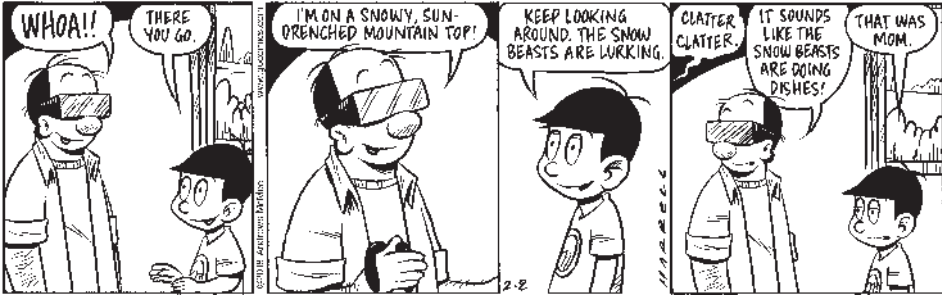
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Bam-boozle

4 Nada

8 Holly-wood clashers

12 Year in Spain

13 Cameo shape

14 TV's "Warrior Princess"

15 Currently

17 Ship's front

18 Kimono sash

19 Mer-chants

21 Singer's bane

24 "The Matrix" hero

25 Toss in

26 Corn-field noise

28 Bridal path

32 Mediocre grades

34 Scratch

36 Despot

37 Propelled a scull

DOWN

1 Soup container

2 Lennon's lady

3 "Oh, that explains it!"

4 Signs in the sky

5 Actress Longoria

6 Sun-beams

7 Mary-Kate or Ashley

8 Use

9 "Chicago" actor

10 — about (roughly)

11 Tools with teeth

16 Copper head?

20 Meadow

21 Mexican snack

22 Concept

23 Ewe's mate

27 Bankroll

29 Gilligan's boat

30 Volcanic flow

31 Ireland

33 Extra helpings

35 Ump

38 Author Brown

40 Genie's bestowals

43 "Don Juan" poet

45 Scribble (down)

46 Long lunch?

47 It takes the cake

48 Lion's pride?

49 Calf-length

53 "Shoo!"

54 Vintage

55 Director Craven

Solution time: 24 mins.

G	A	G	S	O	A	P	U	R	A	L
U	F	O	A	G	N	F	N	O	N	O
F	A	-	W	I	R	I	P	O	O	I
F	R	A	U	D	K	F	A			
P	O	O	-	S	I	D	E	D	I	R
A	H	A	T	O	S	I	R	O	I	E
W	I	S	P	G	E	N	E	P	O	O
N	O	-	E	C	L	E	F	T		
P	G	O	L	H	A	L	L	S	F	O
A	C	R	E	G	O	Y	A	R	A	T
S	T	A	T	O	P	E	L	O	D	E

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Seth Green, 44; Mary Steenburgen, 65; Robert Klein, 76; Nick Nolte, 77.

Happy Birthday: Any alterations you want to make personally, physically or emotionally should be well-thought-out. Take your time and do your own research. Avoid making a mistake that will turn into a costly lesson instead of a gain based on common sense. Past experience will help you define what's important and help you set positive priorities. Self-control is essential. Your numbers are 2, 13, 19, 25, 34, 40, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Set up a guideline that will help you save more and spend less. Don't feel you have to follow what someone else is doing. Figure out what works best for you and take the initiative to bring about positive change. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Be cautious when dealing with personal relationships. Don't let anyone take advantage of your emotional vulnerability. Protect against injury and illness. Get involved in a fitness and diet regimen that will help improve your physical strength and overall health. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Make sure your motives are good before you begin something new. Your success will not be sweet if it comes at someone else's expense. Work alongside others to make matters better for everyone involved. Romance is encouraged. ★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Over-doing it will set you back. Look for legitimate ways to get ahead without

jeopardizing your position, relationship or reputation. A partnership will steer you in a positive direction. ★★★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't be gullible. Generosity is a wonderful trait, but if someone is trying to take advantage of your kindness, you have to know when to say "no." If you want to bring about change, look inward and make improvements that benefit you. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Be careful how you handle domestic affairs. Someone will be eager to pick a fight, offer false information or revert to emotional blackmail if you aren't knowledgeable about what's happened in the past. Ask questions and remain calm. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Plan a trip or an excursion that will be educational and informative. Delve into your past in order to discover what it is you should pursue in the future. Love and romance are on the rise. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Personal problems will develop if you or someone close to you is indulgent or emotionally unstable. Do your best to keep things running smoothly and avoid making any rash decisions. Protect against injury and ill health. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll be tempted to make a purchase that isn't likely to do what it's supposed to do. Don't be gullible or believe everything you are told. A skeptical attitude will help you avoid making a mistake. ★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Trust in your abilities. Don't let anyone take advantage of you or make you feel like you have less to offer than anyone else. Show some discipline and the desire to enhance what you do with new techniques, strategy and knowledge. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't waste time trying to do the impossible or get involved in costly or time-consuming endeavors. A responsible attitude will help you avoid being coerced into joining forces with someone who has big dreams and little experience. ★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Avoid indulgence, poor choices and abrupt actions. Whether it's you getting out of control or someone else, consider the consequence of your actions. Too much of anything will end poorly. Focus on helping others. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are innovative, challenging and playful. You are brave and determined.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

	4		1	3						
						6			9	
	8			9	6					
7		2								6
		8		5		3				
6						5			7	
			7	2				4		
1		7								
			5	9		1				

Difficulty Level ★★ ★ 2/08
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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4	1	9	7	5	8	2	6	3
2	3	7	4	6	1	8	9	5
8	6	5	2	3	9	4	7	1
1	2	4	3	8	6	7	5	9
9	5	6	1	7	2	3	8	4
3	7	8	5	9	4	1	2	6
5	8	3	6	1	7	9	4	2
6	9	2	8	4	3	5	1	7
7	4	1	9	2	5	6	3	8

Boldly Easy ★★ ★

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Must have at least 5 years work experience in communication business. Knowledge and expertise in programming and repair of iDen communication handsets. Must have experience in working on telecommunications field equipment and structures. Computer literate and must have good communication skills.

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- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| (1) Production Manager | (1) Refrigeration & Aircon Technician |
| (6) Accountant | (1) Production Clerk |
| (18) Baker | (1) Production Supervisor |
| (3) Cake Decorator | (2) Sales Representative |
| (1) Catering Coordinator | (3) Food Service Worker |
| (7) Cook | (1) Executive Secretary |
| (1) Cook Assistant | (1) Warehouseman |
| (2) Packer | |

Interested applicants may send their resume to sales.saipan@hermansbakery.com or pick-up an application form at our HR office at Tun Herman Pan Road (Airport Road).

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Interested applicants may send their applications or resumes via email to gemkell_recruitment@tanholdings.com.

To be considered, resumes/application documents must be submitted **not later than 5:00PM on February 19, 2018**. Applications for Employment are available at the Century Tours Office, Kanoa Resort. Background checks and pre-employment drug test will be required prior to employment.



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Applications must be received by 5:00pm on Friday, February 23rd, 2017.

PIC applications are available at the PIC Security Desk by the Loading Dock/Employee Entrance. Incomplete applications will NOT be accepted or considered. PIC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MVA-RFP-18-2009

For: Local Publication and Media Services

Submission /Closing Date: **February 23, 2018**
Time: **3:00 p.m.**

Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority
Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building
Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **January 16, 2018**, at the **Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan**, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified courier services by February 23, 2018, and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the Commonwealth must notify the MVA/ Mr. David B. Muna in writing of their intent to submit a proposal in order to receive the additional seven (7) days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. Participants outside the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** must submit a Notice of Intent by any mode of written communication including facsimile at +1-670-664-3237 or email to dmuna@mymarianas.com, and must be received by 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on **February 23, 2018**.

All questions regarding this RFP must be sent to Mr. David B. Muna at dmuna@mymarianas.com or faxed to +1-670-664-3237, **no later than 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on February 09, 2018**.

/s/ Gloria C. Cavanagh
Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director



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McDaniels backs out of Colts deal, stays with Pats



INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Josh McDaniels has backed out of a deal to become the Indianapolis Colts' new coach, a decision that shocked the franchise hours after it announced his hiring.

The Colts confirmed McDaniels' decision in a statement Tuesday night after reports emerged that the Patriots' offensive coordinator had opted to stay in New England with coach Bill Belichick.

McDaniels had agreed to contract terms with the Colts to replace the fired Chuck Pagano, and a news conference had been scheduled for Wednesday at Lucas Oil Stadium.

Just a few hours later, the Colts said McDaniels informed them he would not sign the deal.

"Although we are surprised and disappointed, we will resume our head coaching search immediately and find the right fit to lead our team and organization on and off the field," the Colts said in the statement.

The Patriots and McDaniels' agent, Bob LaMonte, did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

"I'm speechless," former Colts receiver Reggie Wayne told NFL Network. "I've talked with people in the Colts organization and they feel like they've been hoodwinked."

It's also not clear how the Colts will proceed from here.

By spurning Indy after it waited 22 days for the playoffs to end, McDaniels leaves the reeling franchise as the only one without a coach—in early February. New England's defensive coordinator, Matt Patricia, left Belichick's staff a day after the Patriots' Super Bowl loss to become coach of the Detroit Lions.



Indy had interviewed several candidates for the job, including two that were hired by other teams—Matt Nagy went to Chicago and Mike Vrabel to Tennessee. Another potential candidate, Baylor coach Matt Rhule, had already announced he was returning to the college ranks

before the Colts had settled on McDaniels, who at age 41 is considered one of the game's best young minds.

He's been considered a top-tier head coaching candidate for several years even though his only other coaching stint with Denver ended badly. He went 8-8 with the Broncos in

2009 and 3-9 in 2010 before he was fired with three games left in the season. He worked with the St. Louis Rams in 2011 before returning to New England in 2012, where he has been the offensive coordinator ever since.

And turning down his second chance, after agreeing to

a deal with Indy, could make other teams outside of New England more hesitant to hire McDaniels. His decision will also have ramifications for the coaches who were set to join his staff.

It's unusual but not unprecedented in league history for a deal with a new coach to fall

In this Jan. 21, 2018, file photo, New England Patriots offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels watches from the sideline during the first half of the AFC championship NFL football game against the Jacksonville Jaguars in Foxborough, Mass.

through at the last minute. McDaniels' move was eerily reminiscent of his mentor, Belichick, who resigned as coach of the Jets with a handwritten note less than a day after he was hired in 2000.

Although McDaniels never signed his contract with Indianapolis, his stint was even shorter. The team announced his hiring on its Twitter account late Tuesday morning. Hours later, the Colts had deleted the tweet and replaced it with the statement about his withdrawal.

Pagano was fired Dec. 31 after the team finished 4-12 in a season without injured quarterback Andrew Luck.

Within days of Pagano's ouster, Colts general manager Chris Ballard interviewed McDaniels during the Patriots' postseason bye week. Two weeks later, reports indicated the deal was all but finished and potential suitors, like the New York Giants, started hiring other coaches.

Now the Colts find themselves in perhaps the toughest position of all—finding a new coach in February.

In Indianapolis, where the fan base already loathed the Patriots, McDaniels' sudden change of heart didn't go over well.

The City of Noblesville, a northern suburb of Indy, put this on Twitter: "Unlike Josh McDaniels, we stay true to our commitments. Noblesville street crews will be out tonight once winter weather hits you can 'do your job' tomorrow."

Patriots' Butler denies off-field misconduct before benching

BOSTON -- Patriots cornerback Malcolm Butler says he didn't miss a curfew or do anything off the field that would have hurt New England's chances of winning the Super Bowl before he was benched for the game.

In a statement released Tuesday on Twitter and Instagram, Butler says reports of misconduct off the field

are "ridiculous."

He says he visited with family every night while in Minneapolis. He adds, "I never attended any concert, missed curfew, or participated in any of the ridiculous activities being reported. They are not only false, but hurtful to me and my family."

Before the Super Bowl, Butler was on the field for 98 percent of the Patriots' defen-

sive snaps and started 17 of their 18 games. But he made it on the field for only one special teams play on Sunday as the Philadelphia Eagles racked up 538 yards of offense, including 374 yards passing, and won 41-33. Patriots coach Bill Belichick has not explained why Butler was benched.

After the game, Butler told ESPN that he "could have

changed the game." He also used a profanity and said the Patriots "gave up" on him.

In his statement, Butler apologized for the language he used "during a very emotional time." His statement was "liked" on Instagram by teammates Tom Brady and Martellus Bennett.

Butler is an unrestricted free agent this offseason.



SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Home run king Barry Bonds will have his No. 25 jersey retired this August by the San Francisco Giants when his former Pittsburgh Pirates are in town.

The Giants announced Tuesday they would hold a ceremony to honor the former slugger and seven-time NL MVP on Aug. 11. He will become only the 12th player from the New York or San Francisco Giants to have his number retired.

Bonds, now 53 and an adviser in the club's front office, broke Hank Aaron's home run record with No. 756 on Aug. 7, 2007. He finished his 22-year big league career that season with 762 homers and under a cloud of steroids allegations. On the 10th anniversary

Giants to retire Bonds' No. 25 jersey

sary of his record-breaking blast, Bonds said he wished he could have played one more season with San Francisco and believes he might have reached 800 homers.

"I'm both honored and humbled that the Giants are going to retire my number this season," Bonds said. "As I've always said, the Giants and Giants fans are a part of my family. Growing up, Candlestick Park was my home away from home, and it is where my dad and godfather Willie (Mays) played."

"For me to have played on the same field as them, wear the same uniform and now have my number retired, joining Willie and the other Giants legends is extreme-

ly special. Number 25 has meant a lot to me throughout my career and it is even more special that I got to share that with my dad," he said.

Bonds joins an elite list of Giants to receive the distinction: Orlando Cepeda (30), Juan Marichal (27), Mays (24), Willie McCovey (44) and Gaylord Perry (36) with San Francisco. Members of the New York Giants were Bill Terry (3), Mel Ott (4), Carl Hubbell (11) and Monte Irvin (20). Christy Mathewson and John McGraw were honored despite playing before numbers were on uniforms.

In July 2015, Bonds said he had a huge "weight lifted" when federal prosecutors dropped what was left of their criminal case

against him after a nearly decade-long steroids prosecution.

He was on 56.4 percent of Hall of Fame ballots for the 2018 class. He drew 36.2 percent in his initial appearance of 2013.

"No other Giants player has worn No. 25 since Barry's final season. It's time to officially retire his number in honor of his remarkable 22-year career as one of the greatest players of all time and for his countless achievements and contributions as a Giant," CEO Larry Baer said. "Barry grew up with the Giants and followed in the footsteps of his godfather Willie Mays and another Giant legend who also wore No. 25—his late father, Bobby. By officially retiring

No. 25, we will not only pay tribute to Barry as the greatest player of his generation, but also honor the legacy of two of the greatest players to ever wear a Giants uniform."

Meanwhile, in Minnesota, Twins right-hander Ervin Santana will miss the start of the regular season after unexpected surgery on his right middle finger.

The Twins announced the 35-year-old right-hander had the procedure Tuesday in New York by Dr. Charles Melone, after Santana experienced discomfort during a bullpen session last week. Santana is expected to need 10 to 12 weeks of rehabilitation before he can pitch in a major league game, which

would keep him out of the rotation until at least mid-April.

Santana has had trouble with the digit before and had an X-ray and MRI after the 2017 season, when doctors determined there was no injury to the tendon. He was treated with an injection at the time. The injury resurfaced last week, and Melone's recommendation was surgery. The procedure to the joint of the finger is a capsular release/debridement. The Twins said the injury stems from wear and tear, not one acute event.

Santana was an All-Star last year, going 16-8 with a 3.28 ERA in 211 1/3 innings over 33 starts. He led the majors with five complete games and three shutouts. He started the AL wild card game, which the Twins lost at Yankee Stadium.

Magic stun Cavs as LeBron says he's staying put



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—After another embarrassing defeat and two days before the trade deadline, LeBron James let it be known he's not going anywhere, at least for now.

"I'm here for this season right now to try and figure out a way we can still compete," James said after his Cleveland Cavaliers blew a 21-point lead in a 116-98 loss to the Orlando Magic. "I owe it to my teammates to finish this season out no matter how it ends up. I would never waive my no-trade clause."

The Cavaliers fell apart in the second half and lost for the 14th time in 21 games. They have given up an average of 122.4 points in their last five losses.

"I couldn't give up on my teammates like that. I just couldn't do it," James said after scoring 25 points. "We put too much into the game every single day."

"This is no time to be ashamed about our season," he added. "We've got quite a few games left. If we're still serious about the season, then we've got to play some good ball at some point."

Jonathon Simmons scored 22 of his career-high 34 points in the third quarter for the Magic, who broke a nine-game home-court losing streak against Cleveland.

The Cavaliers scored 43 points in the first quarter, but then went almost 6 1/2 minutes without scoring in the fourth. They played the second half without coach Tyrone Lue, who went to the locker room in the second quarter with what the team said was an illness.

"It's like right now, when we

hit adversity, we go our separate ways," guard Isaiah Thomas said. "And that's just how I feel and it looks like that as well."

The Magic made their first 10 shots of the second half and won consecutive games for the first time since Nov. 8-10.

James did not have a rebound or an assist in a foul-plagued second half.

"I gave my teammates some opportunities to knock 'em down, but they just didn't go. You can't get assists when they don't go down, but that doesn't stop me from finding my guys on the floor," he said. "At this point it's not what you say, it's what you do. We've got to go out and play well as a collective group, everyone hitting at the right time on all cylinders, and right now we're not doing that."

Bucks 103, Knicks 89

In New York, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 23 points, jumping over Tim Hardaway Jr. for one high-flying slam, and the Milwaukee Bucks beat the New York Knicks 103-89 on Tuesday night after Kristaps Porzingis tore his left ACL.

Porzingis was injured after crashing to the ground following a successful dunk with 8:46 left in the second quarter. He was taken for an MRI exam that revealed the injury.

Eric Bledsoe also had 23 points and Khris Middleton added 20 for the Bucks, who are a season-high seven games over .500

Thunder 125, Warriors 105

In Oakland, Russell Westbrook had 34 points, nine rebounds and nine assists to get the better of old buddy and teammate Kevin Durant, Paul



George scored 38 points, and Oklahoma City embarrassed defending champion Golden State to snap a four-game losing streak.

Durant scored 33 points but didn't get as much help from the cold-shooting Splash Brothers of Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson, who added 21 and 12 points, respectively. They combined to go 11 of 27 from the floor and 4 for 15 on 3-pointers as the Warriors lost

for the third time in four games. They lost their tempers, too—as in five technicals total.

Draymond Green was ejected with 8:13 remaining after a second technical when he argued with the officials.

Raptors 111, Celtics 91

In Toronto, Kyle Lowry scored 23 points, C.J. Miles had 20 and Toronto snapped Boston's four-game winning streak.

DeMar DeRozan added

15 points, Delon Wright had 14 and Fred VanVleet 10 as Toronto won its fifth straight home meeting over Boston, closing to within a game of the conference-leading Celtics.

Kyrie Irving returned after missing the previous three games because of a bruised right quad to score 17 points in 22 minutes.

Reserve forward Marcus Morris also returned for Boston after sitting out two games

because of a bruised left hip.

Rockets 123, Nets 113
In New York, James Harden scored 36 points, surpassing 15,000 for his career, and Houston beat Brooklyn for its fifth straight victory.

Chris Paul added 25 points for the Rockets, who kept right on rolling in their first game since their nationally televised romp in Cleveland on Saturday.

Both teams made 16 3-pointers in an entertaining shootout between Mike D'Antoni's Rockets and the Nets of Kenny Atkinson, who assisted D'Antoni in New York and has the Nets trying to do some of the things Houston does on offense.

76ers 115, Wizards 102

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid had 27 points and 12 rebounds, and the 76ers helped the city of Philadelphia continue to celebrate by leading from start to finish in a victory over Washington.

Dario Saric added 20 points and J.J. Redick had 18 for the 76ers, who snapped Washington's five-game winning streak while playing in front of a raucous crowd still in a tizzy over the Philadelphia Eagles' Super Bowl win over the New England Patriots.

Hawks 108, Grizzlies 82

In Atlanta, Dennis Schroder scored 22 points and Atlanta beat turnover-plagued Memphis, giving the struggling Grizzlies their fourth straight loss.

Schroder, who sat out the final period, had five assists. Rookie John Collins had 15 points and 10 rebounds.

Mario Chalmers had 13 points for Memphis, which has lost six of seven. Dillon Brooks had 12 points.

Lakers 112, Suns 93

In Los Angeles, Brandon Ingram scored 26 points, Julius Randle added 21 points, eight rebounds and five assists, and Los Angeles beat Phoenix.

The Lakers pulled away in the last eight minutes of the fourth quarter, using a 15-3 run after leading 97-90.

The Lakers held the Suns to just 14 points in the final period. TJ Warren scored a team-high 24 points, while Josh Jackson added 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Suns.

Teams consider bloated payroll as trade deadline nears

NEW YORK (AP)—As the trade deadline approaches, executives across the league are using the same word to describe the market: "clogged." As in, clogged with available players no one wants for the desired price, and clogged with bloated long-term salaries—stinky leftovers from the 2016 cap spike -- no one wants at (almost) any price.

Derrick Favors is a useful bellwether. He is a good player on an expiring \$12 million contract, and very much on the market, according to several league sources and prior reports. In past financial crunches, a team in Utah's situation could have extracted a ton of value by peddling a decent-sized expiring contract.

The model was simple: You need payroll relief, and we have a solid player on an

expiring contract. Rent Favors, and send us a good player on a long-term deal—plus a draft pick for our trouble. Utah is not a free-agent destination, so snagging a starter on a long-term contract in exchange for a guy walking out the door could be a win—free agency via trade.

Then you scan the pile of available guys on long-term deals and realize: There might not be a single one the Jazz want. Ditto for Dallas (sitting on \$13 million in cap space), Phoenix (\$10 million), or any team dangling a big expiring contract. Who wants any of the multiyear, eight-figure deals clogging cap sheets in Portland, Milwaukee, Charlotte, Miami and elsewhere? The summer of 2016 warped everything.

Some teams with big ex-

pirings—the Lakers with Brook Lopez and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope; Minnesota with Cole Aldrich; the Blazers with Ed Davis—aren't in position to take any long-term money back. Some are capped out; others (e.g., the Lakers) are hoarding space for this summer.

At the same time, who is trading a first-round pick to rent Favors, Rodney Hood, Tyreke Evans, Lou Williams, or any other potential difference-maker on an expiring deal? Only a few teams can talk themselves into having any shot against Golden State or Houston, and a few of those—Toronto, Oklahoma City, even the Rockets themselves—already forked over first-rounders in prior trades.

Houston and Washington traded first-rounders at last

year's deadline, but they accomplished two things in those deals: They bolstered their roster, and got off dead money. That double merited forking over a pick. New Orleans tossed away a pick to grab Nikola Mirotic, and offload Omer Asik's hideous deal.

Doing both of those things in one trade is hard. Capped-out teams really, really do not want to cough up a first-rounder to accomplish just one of them—the jettisoning of unwanted contracts. That hurts. That is also what teams with cap flexibility are charging for absorbing those contracts. The common ground is narrow.

Some bad teams with dead money don't have much incentive to unload it if doing so costs them a first-round pick. Take the Magic: They'd love to get off the horrific

deal that will pay Bismack Biyombo \$17 million per year through 2019-20, but why should they give up any draft picks to do it now? They stink, they're OK stinking to chase the No. 1 pick, and they aren't in danger of going over the tax this season or next. Starting Biyombo helps them stink. The price for dumping his contract will decline the minute the calendar flips to July 1, and it ticks one year closer to expiration.

It's tough finding impact trades in which the situations of two teams align. Good luck if you need a third team. There will be a bunch of deals. There always are. Unexpected stuff will happen. But we may get a pile of smaller, lateral deals—and no blockbuster sequel to the Blake Griffin trade.

Public asked to refrain from using closed track oval

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Marianas Sports Association executive director Tony Rogolifo is once again informing the community that the track oval at the Oleai Sports Complex remains closed for public use.

Rogolifo made the appeal after finding out that some people are sneaking in to use the track oval, to the extent that they are climbing over the chain link fence.

"Technically, the track is still closed. We want to keep it that way until all repairs and improvements are done. We can't assign somebody from our staff to stay there the whole day. That's why, if any of us see someone on the track, we ask them politely to finish the lap and leave afterwards,"

He said that people should know better, especially if they see that the gates are closed.

"We know walking or run-



A heavy equipment operator works at the center field of the Oleai Sports Complex. Renovation and other improvements at the facility are expected to finish this month.

ning on the track is good for your knees and we can't al-

ways monitor the facility, so please we are asking for ev-

eryone's cooperation," Rogolifo appealed.

NMSA is looking to keep the track and field facility, which was resurfaced last year, intact in time for Saipan's hosting of the 2018 Oceania Micronesia Regional Championships in June. Saipan is also hosting the 2021 Pacific Mini Games.

"We're hurrying things up in time for the regional championships in athletics. We know that athletics wanted to use the track so they could train their athletes in preparation for the championships. We are also asking for their patience," said Rogolifo.

The NMSA official added that improvement work at the track's center field is expected to be done this week or early next with the dirt that was sifted now being compacted.

"The grass will be planted. Once it grows and the

color turns to green, we're going to mow it and we could finally allow everyone to use it. We're going to meet with all the federations to set up the schedule for the usage of the facility," said Rogolifo.

"We're also going to set up guidelines in using the facility. Simple do's and don'ts while inside the track since fixing it is not cheap. We're going to put up a sign that has these guidelines in different languages so everyone in our community could understand it," he added.

And since NMSA is a non-profit organization, Rogolifo said they would impose fees for the use of any of the facilities inside the sports complex. The fees will be minimal and the money collected will be used for maintenance and operational costs.



Tagaman Triathlon registration on

The 29th Tagaman Triathlon is slated for March 24 and online registration has started.

Registration is available online at www.webscorer.com under Race ID 116992 or by linking via www.saipantriathlon.com. The registration fees on or before Feb. 28 are \$120/solo for 70.3 and \$100 solo/\$200 team for 51.50. Registration after February 28 will be \$150/solo for 70.3 and \$120 solo/\$240 team for 51.50. The last day to register is March 17.

The Tagaman Triathlon is an annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority

(MVA), aimed at attracting visiting athletes and media coverage for The Marianas. Organization of this year's event has been co-hosted and in cooperation with Triathlon Association of the CNMI (TRAC). The official triathlon hotel is Kanoa Resort.

"The MVA is looking forward to again working with TRAC in continuing the Tagaman tradition with another great race this year," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "Tagaman remains one of our foundation races as

we continue to grow the reputation of The Marianas as an ideal sports destination."

This year's starting point and swim leg will be held in the waters off Kanoa Resort. Bikers will then transition at Minachom Atdao pavilion in Susupe and make the 40K bike course to Banzai Cliff and back, while 70.3 participants will go all the way to Koblerville and back. The 10K run will turn around at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan, while 70.3 will have to do two loops at the pathway

to complete the course.

Cash prizes await the Top 3 finishers in the women's and men's open categories: \$1,000 for first place, \$700 for second place, and \$500 for third place. Medals will be awarded for the age group division winners, team, and individual finishers respectively.

Early sponsors for the 29th Tagaman Triathlon include DFS, IT&E, Marpac, Pacific Development, Inc., Hyatt Regency Saipan, Triple J Enterprises, Pacifica Insurance, RNV Construction, Marianas Resort & Spa, Saipan Ice & Water, and The Shack. (PR)



SBL

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in baseball," said Hong, who pitched in their game against the Cubs.

"Four years ago, we always play against Koreans who are here on Saipan. This is the third straight year that we are playing against Saipan teams. We are

looking forward again to come back and play against them."

Hong added that members of Gongnoriya are multi-artists by day and baseball players by night.

"Baseball is also big in Korea. We love playing baseball. We're celebrities but playing baseball is one of our passions. We enjoy playing for fun. We're

actors, comedians, and singers, but at night we're baseball players. If I'm not an actor, I would have been a player in the Korean league," added Hong.

The group, which visits Saipan two times a year, arrived Thursday night and left yesterday morning.

Another Korean group will be arriving in the next two

weeks and will be playing several tune-up matches from Feb. 22 to 23 also at the "Tan Ko" baseball field.

Yong Chul Jang of M&E Enterprises Inc. Saipan, in cooperation with SBL coordinator Tony Rogolifo, arranged for the scrimmages between the SBL teams and the visiting South Korean group.

SWEEP

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a sweep of its opening assignment after Carruthers teamed up with Papua New Guinea's Abigail Tere-Apisah in dismantling Shahrzad Banisaeid and Kimia Rahmani in the doubles, 6-0, 6-0.

With its convincing win on Day 1 of the tournament, the Gilles De Gouy-captained Pacific Oceania took the early lead in Pool C. Oman and Malaysia are also in the group with the former nosing out

the latter, 2-1, to gain second place in the team standings.

The pool play continued yesterday with Carol and company scheduled to challenge Oman and Malaysia and Iran set to duel in the other pairing in their group. Pacific Oceania will then close the elimination round today when it faces Malaysia.

The 2018 Fed Cup Asia/Oceania Zone Group II has three more pools with the top finisher in each group advancing to the semifinals. In the Final Four, the No. 1 placers

in Pool A and C will battle for a finals berth, while the other pairing will be the No. 1 finisher in Pool B versus the No. 1 in Pool D. The finalists will then be promoted to the elite Group I in 2019, while the losing semifinalists will remain in Group II.

Pool A has Uzbekistan, New Zealand, and Lebanon and the former won the first match in the group against the latter, 3-0. There are also three teams in Pool B with the Philippines edging Kyrgyzstan, 2-1, Singapore completes Pool B and

was slated to square off against Kyrgyzstan yesterday. For Pool D, Indonesia and Pakistan won their opening matches against host Bahrain, 3-0, and Sri Lanka, 2-1, respectively.

Among the 14 teams playing in the Bahrain, four are seeded and favored to win the tournament. Uzbekistan is seeded first with its No. 33 ranking in the world and was followed by No. 48 the Philippines, No. 55 Malaysia, and No. 56 Indonesia. Pacific Oceania is seeded at No. 6 with its 61st rankings.

SHIRLEY'S

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12 markers.

Shirley's was on target from beyond the arc, knocking in nine triples to ease past POI, which dropped four of its last five games after having a 2-0 start. Jesse Santos led POI with his 14 markers.

Meanwhile, Fiesta Resort won anew the duel between last year's finalists after downing defending champion Kanoa Resort in the curtain-raiser, 55-49.

Fiesta withstood Kanoa Resort's comeback bid in the second half, as the former held the latter's gunner, Douglas Schmidt, to two field goals at the halfway mark of that period. Before slowing down, Schmidt scored 12 points—8 straight to end the first half—at the break and drilled 5 of Kanoa Resort's first 7 markers in the second frame.

While Schmidt was a bit quiet in the latter part of the second half, Fiesta Resort's Lerio Pagarao put on a show in the final period, firing 16 straight points. Pagarao had only 2 markers in the first half, which ended with Fiesta ahead by double figures, 34-24, thanks to the 12 points of Elmer Esdrelon, who made all his baskets from downtown. Esdrelon was then shut down in the second half, leaving Pagarao to carry the cudgels for Fiesta and foil Kanoa Resort's comeback bid.

In other results, *Saipan Tribune* defeated Lower Base in the third game, 55-49, to climb to third place in the team standings.

Young guns Hark Galarion and Lester Lapuz delivered for *Saipan Tribune* with the former logging a game-high 20 points and the latter chipping in 17. Matthew Ong also

finished in twin digits with his 11 markers, as he joined forces with Galarion and Lapuz in giving *Saipan Tribune* a 32-25 halftime advantage.

Saipan Tribune then kept the driver's seat in the second half behind the strong finish of Lapuz, who recorded 13 points in that period and scored 7 of the squad's last 10 markers.

Saipan Tribune will shoot for win No. 5 that would further boost its playoff chances when it takes on Fiesta tomorrow at 7pm. In the first game at 6pm, POI will face Lower Base, while in the third match at 8pm, it will be Shirley's against Kanoa Resort.

First Game

Fiesta Resort 55 — Pagarao 18, Esdrelon 12, Nonato 7, Arreza 4, Ngirarois 4, Sedillo 4, Quizon 4, Francisco 2.

Kanoa Resort 49 — Schmidt 21, Pablo 17, Francisco 4, Joab 3, Encarnacion 2, Bustillo 2.

Scoring by halves: 34-24, 55-49.

Second Game

Shirley's 77 — Jugos 29, Laxa 26, Guiab 14, Alonzo 4, Palma 4.

POI 60 — Santos 14, Yu 12, Kaipat 9, Nakashima 7, Dee 4, Deleon Guerrero 3, Guevarra 3, Mendiola 2, Bait 2, Delos Santos 2.

Scoring by halves: 37-30, 77-60.

Third Game

Saipan Tribune 55 — Galarion 20, Lapuz 17, M. Ong 11, Angeles 4, De La Torre 3.

Lower Base 49 — Riungel 13, Kenty 12, Echavez 7, Jinang 7, Fujihira 6, W. Benavente 4.

Scoring by halves: 32-25, 55-49.

10th JP 5K Glow Run Winners

PHOTOS By JON PEREZ



A Grace Christian Academy student, center, is all smiles as the Eagles won the contest for private schools with the most participants (140) in last Friday's JP 5K Glow Run at the Garapan Fishing Base. Mt. Carmel School (98) and Agape Christian School (90) finished second and third, respectively.



A Marianas High School student, center, celebrates as the Dolphins had the most participants in the event among public schools. MHS had 173, followed by the 154 of William S. Reyes and the 67 of Garapan Elementary School.



Boys U12 age group winner Jim Maniago, center, poses with runner-up Markus Toves, left, and third placer Anthony Bergancia after they received their medals.



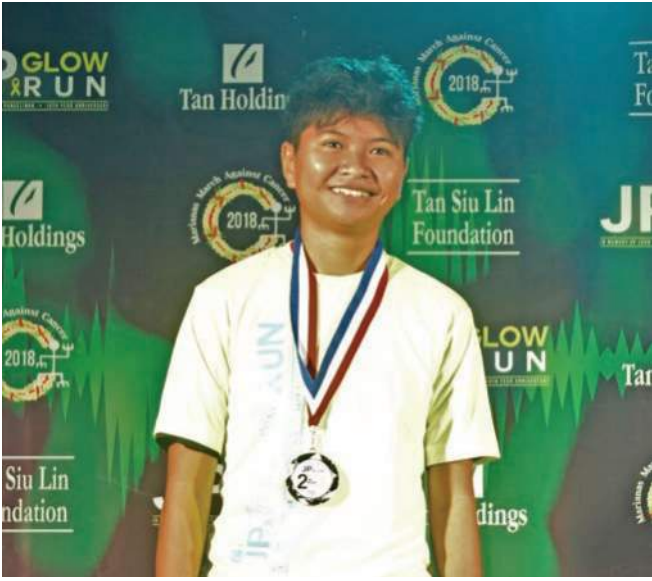
Eleven-year-old Kaithlyn Chavez, center, the champion in the girls U12 age group, is joined at the podium by sisters Aoi, left, and Ayaka Braxton.



Agape Christian School's Leo Li, left, and David Cai pose with their first and third place medals in the men's 13 to 19 age group.



Champion Carl Aldan, center, joins Norman Tanghal, left, and Maverick Ranola at the podium during the awards ceremony for the men's 20 to 29 division.



Brittany Wally is all smiles after getting her runner-up medal in the women's 13 to 19 age group.



Women's 20 to 29 division winner Sarah Van de Wal, right, has her photo taken with runner-up Dani Nowilki.



McDaniels backs out of Colts deal, stays with Pats

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Magic stun Cavs as LeBron says he's staying put

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Carol Lee attempts to return a shot to her brother, Sean, during a training session at the Kanoa Resort courts last December. Carol is now in Bahrain, suiting up for Pacific Oceania and competing in the 2018 Fed Cup Asia/Oceania Zone Group II.

Sweep for Carol, Pacific Oceania

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Carol Lee and her Pacific Oceania Team started their bid in the 2018 Fed Cup Asia/Oceania Zone Group II with an impressive 3-0 victory over Iran last Tuesday in Isa Town, Bahrain.



Lee played in the second singles for Pacific Oceania and dominated Kimiya Asbaghi-pour, as the former nearly shut down her Iranian opponent at the Bahrain Tennis Federation hard courts. Lee cruised to a 6-1 victory in the opening set and then played even better in the second with another easy win, 6-0.

The CNMI junior player's triumph in the second singles match secured Pacific Oceania's victory over Iran as Samoa's Steffi Carruthers earlier downed Sara Azaddoost in the first singles tiff, 6-1, 6-0. Pacific Oceania then completed

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Shirley's keeps playoff hopes alive

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Shirley's Coffee Shop's Duncan Laxa, left, escapes with a fastbreak layup, while POI Aviation's Jesse Santos looks on during the second half of their game in the 2017 Tan Holdings Inter-Company Basketball League late last month at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Shirley's Coffee Shop boosted its playoff chances heading into the closing stage of the elimination round in the 2017 Tan Holdings Inter-Company Basketball League.

Shirley's improved to a 3-4 record following a 77-60 victory over POI Aviation last Jan. 26 at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium. With the win, Shirley's moved up to the No. 4 spot in the team standings, tying POI.

Only the Top 4 teams will

advance to the playoffs and Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan (7-0) and Kanoa Resort (5-3) have already secured two of the tickets to the next round, leaving *Saipan Tribune* (4-3), Shirley's, and POI to battle for the two remaining berths.

John Jugos and Duncan Laxa teamed up in towing Shirley's to its third victory as they combined for more than half of the squad's total production. Jugos exploded for 29 points, while Laxa added 26. Junar Guiab was the third Shirley's player to score in twin digits with his

See SHIRLEY'S on Page 26

SBL teams impresses visiting Koreans

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

A visiting South Korean group was impressed with the talent of Saipan's baseball players, especially the youth team that they challenged in a series of friendly matches at the Francisco "Tan Ko" M. Palacios Ballfield.

Gongnoriya—a visiting team composed of Korean actors, comedians, and singers—played against Saipan Baseball League teams from Sunday to Tuesday night as part of their annual trip to the island. They played against SBL Under 25 champions GSM Cubs on Tuesday night and then faced other squads in the Masters league and SBL's

open division.

Hong Seo Peom, who acted as the leader of the group, said the CNMI has a good baseball program



as shown in their game against the Cubs.

"This is a very young and talented team. All the players have good

strong arms in throwing from the outfield. They are fast. They have a good foundation

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JON PEREZ

A member of the visiting South Korean celebrity group, center, jokes around during a photo-op with his teammates and players from the GSM Cubs after their friendly match last Tuesday night at the Francisco "Tan Ko" M. Palacios Ballfield.